



**Creating Opportunities For
Independent Living And Work**

2015 Comprehensive Statewide Vocational Rehabilitation Consumer Needs Assessment

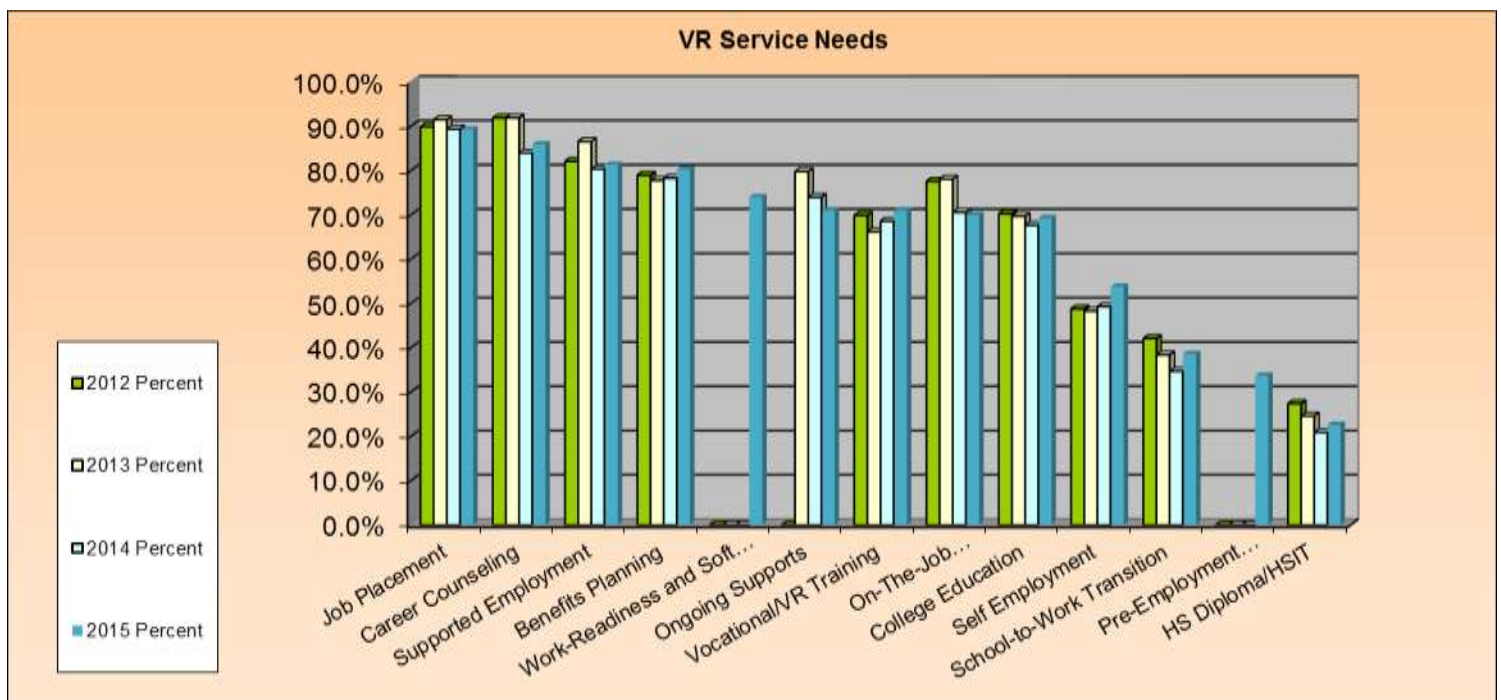
Appendix Documents

**Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
Research, Development, and Performance Management Department**

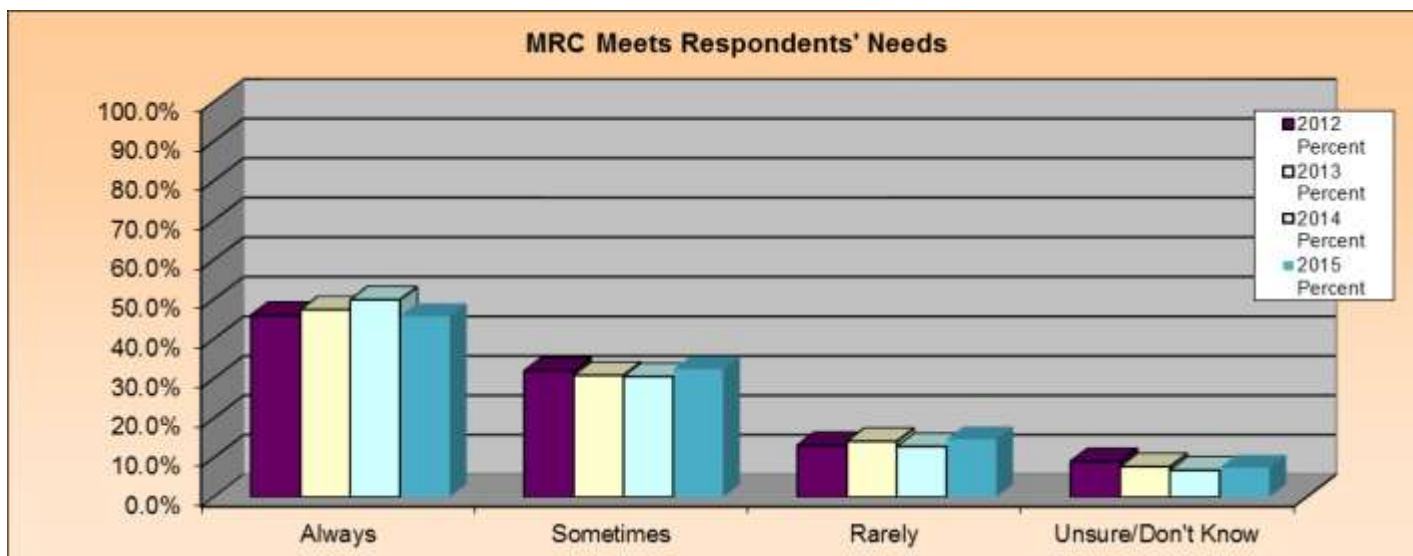
**In collaboration with:
Statewide Rehabilitation Council
Needs Assessment Committee**

March 2016

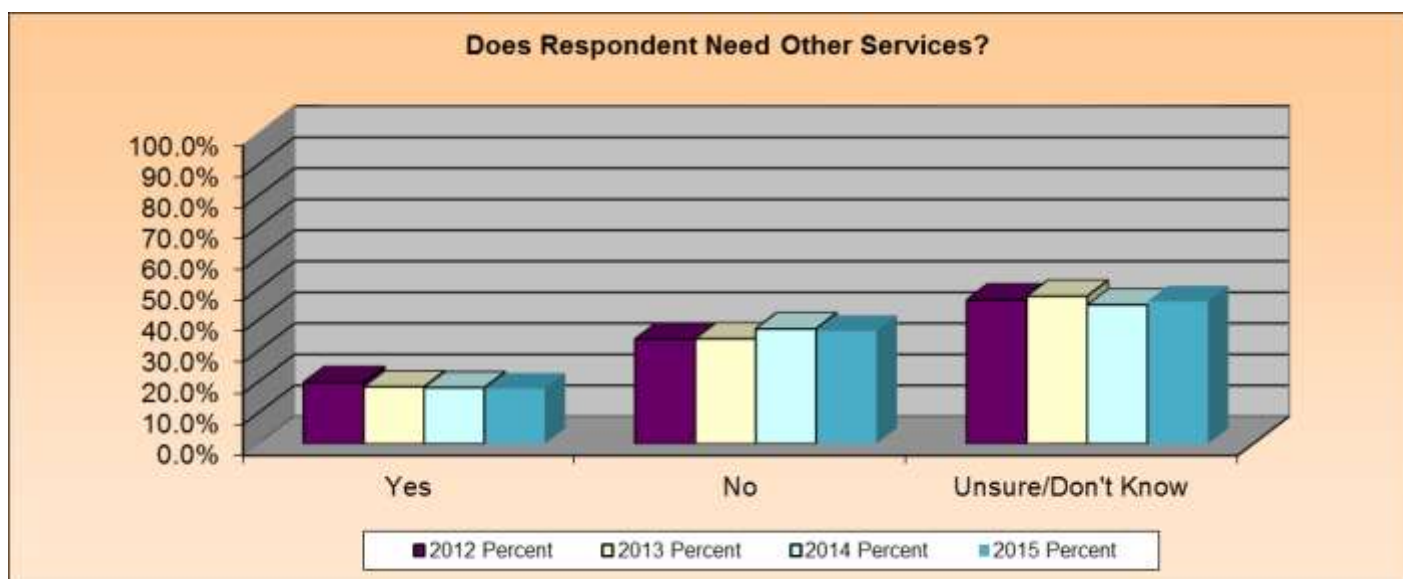
VR Service Needs					
Respondents Answering Very or Somewhat Important					
Need Area	2012 Percent	2013 Percent	2014 Percent	2015 Percent	4 Year Variance
Job Placement	89.9%	91.5%	89.4%	89.3%	-0.60%
Career Counseling	91.9%	91.9%	84.0%	85.9%	-6.00%
Supported Employment	82.1%	86.6%	80.4%	81.3%	-0.80%
Benefits Planning	79.0%	77.8%	78.3%	80.3%	1.30%
Work-Readiness and Soft Skills Training	NA	NA	NA	74.0%	NA
Ongoing Supports	NA	79.8%	74.0%	71.0%	NA
Vocational/VR Training	69.9%	66.2%	68.6%	71.0%	1.10%
On-The-Job Training/Employer Job Driven Training	77.6%	78.1%	70.6%	70.0%	-7.60%
College Education	70.3%	69.7%	67.7%	69.3%	-1.00%
Self Employment	48.8%	48.3%	49.3%	53.8%	5.00%
School-to-Work Transition	42.1%	38.4%	34.7%	38.6%	-3.50%
Pre-Employment Transition Services for HS Students	NA	NA	NA	33.7%	NA
HS Diploma/HSIT	27.4%	24.6%	20.9%	22.6%	-4.80%



MRC Meets Respondent's Needs					
Need Area	2012 Percent	2013 Percent	2014 Percent	2015 Percent	Variance
Always	46.0%	47.4%	49.9%	45.7%	-0.3%
Sometimes	31.9%	30.8%	30.5%	32.3%	0.4%
Rarely	13.1%	14.1%	12.8%	14.6%	1.5%
Unsure/Don't Know	9.0%	7.7%	6.8%	7.4%	-1.6%

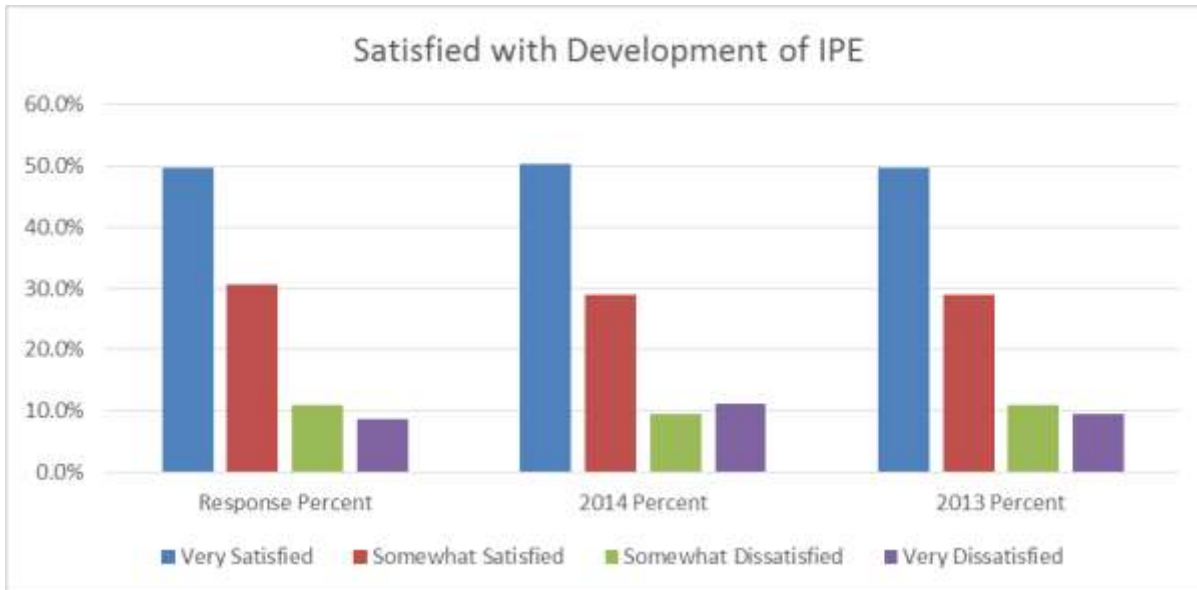


Does Consumer Need Other Services?					
	2012 Percent	2013 Percent	2014 Percent	2015 Percent	4 Year Variance
Yes	19.8%	18.4%	18.1%	17.8%	-2.0%
No	33.8%	33.9%	37.1%	36.4%	2.6%
Unsure/Don't Know	46.4%	47.6%	44.8%	45.9%	-0.5%

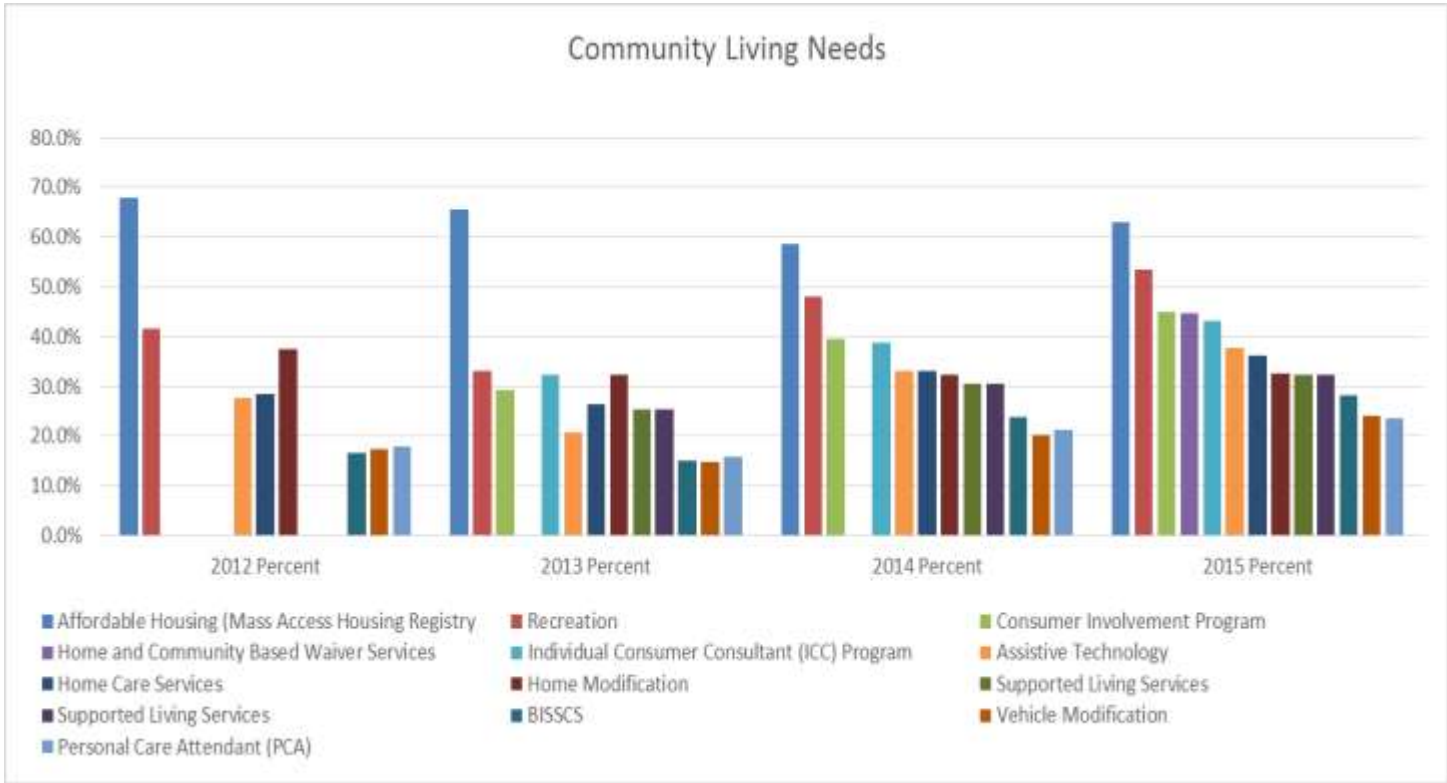


**How satisfied are you with your involvement in the development of your MRC
Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)?**

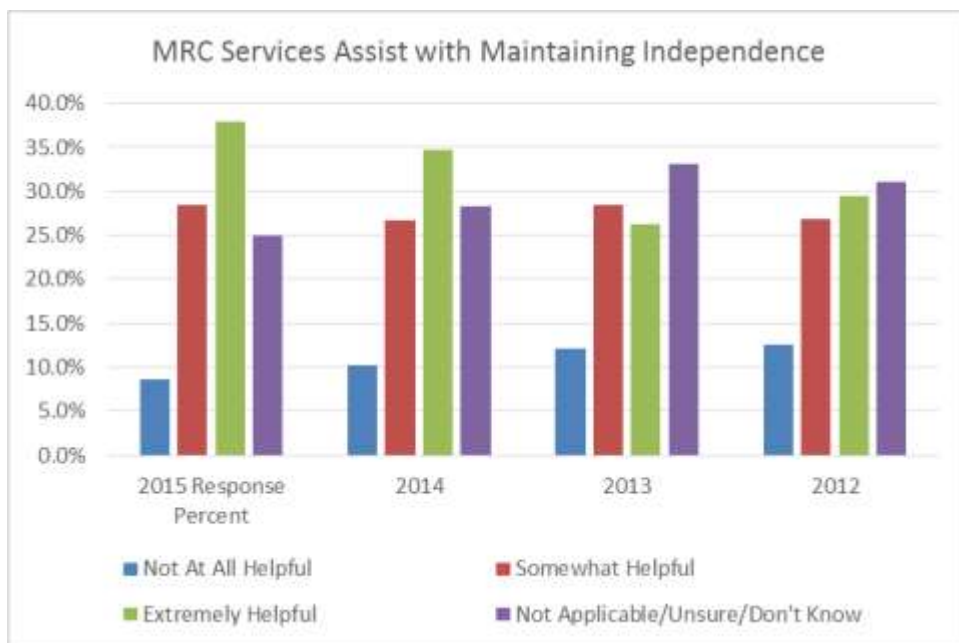
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	2014 Percent	2013 Percent
1 = Very Satisfied	49.6%	699	50.4%	49.6%
2 = Somewhat Satisfied	30.7%	433	28.9%	28.9%
3 = Somewhat Dissatisfied	10.9%	154	9.5%	11.0%
4 = Very Dissatisfied	8.7%	123	11.3%	9.5%



Community Living Needs					
Respondents Answering Very or Somewhat Important					
Need Area	2012 Percent	2013 Percent	2014 Percent	2015 Percent	Variance
Affordable Housing (Mass Access Housing Registry)	67.8%	65.7%	58.6%	63.0%	-4.8%
Recreation	41.5%	33.0%	48.0%	53.5%	12.0%
Consumer Involvement Program	NA	29.2%	39.6%	44.9%	NA
Home and Community Based Waiver Services	NA	NA	NA	44.6%	NA
Individual Consumer Consultant (ICC) Program	NA	32.2%	38.7%	43.2%	NA
Assistive Technology	27.8%	20.8%	33.0%	37.7%	9.9%
Home Care Services	28.5%	26.5%	33.1%	36.1%	7.6%
Home Modification	37.4%	32.3%	32.3%	32.6%	-4.8%
Supported Living Services	NA	25.4%	30.5%	32.4%	NA
BISSCS	16.7%	15.0%	23.8%	28.3%	11.6%
Vehicle Modification	17.5%	14.8%	20.3%	24.0%	6.5%
Personal Care Attendant (PCA)	17.9%	15.8%	21.2%	23.6%	5.7%

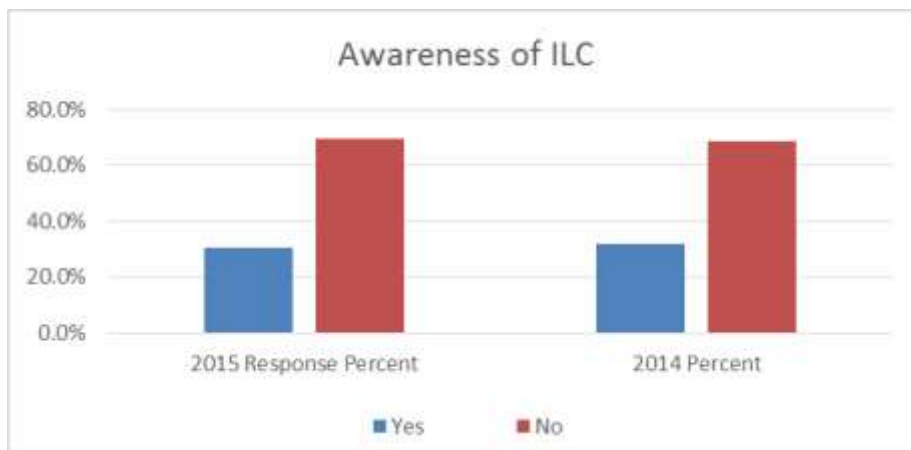


MRC Services Assist With Maintaining Independence					
Answer Options	2015 Response Percent	Response Count	2014	2013	2012
1 = Not At All Helpful	8.6%	119	10.2%	12.1%	12.5%
2 = Somewhat Helpful	28.5%	394	26.7%	28.4%	26.9%
3 = Extremely Helpful	37.9%	524	34.7%	26.3%	29.5%
4 = Not Applicable/Unsure/Don't Know	25.0%	345	28.3%	33.1%	31.1%

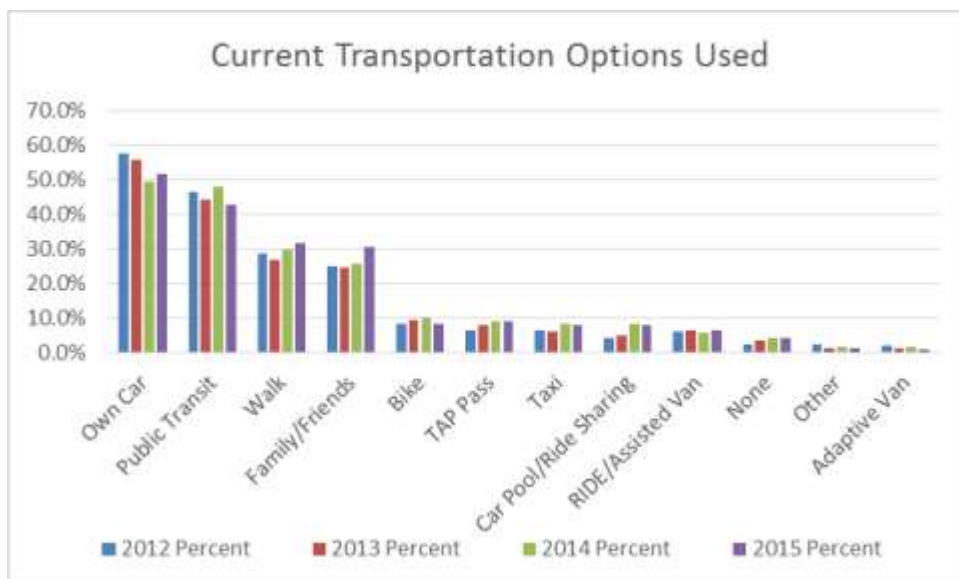


Are you aware of the Independent Living Center (ILC) in your area run by people with disabilities?

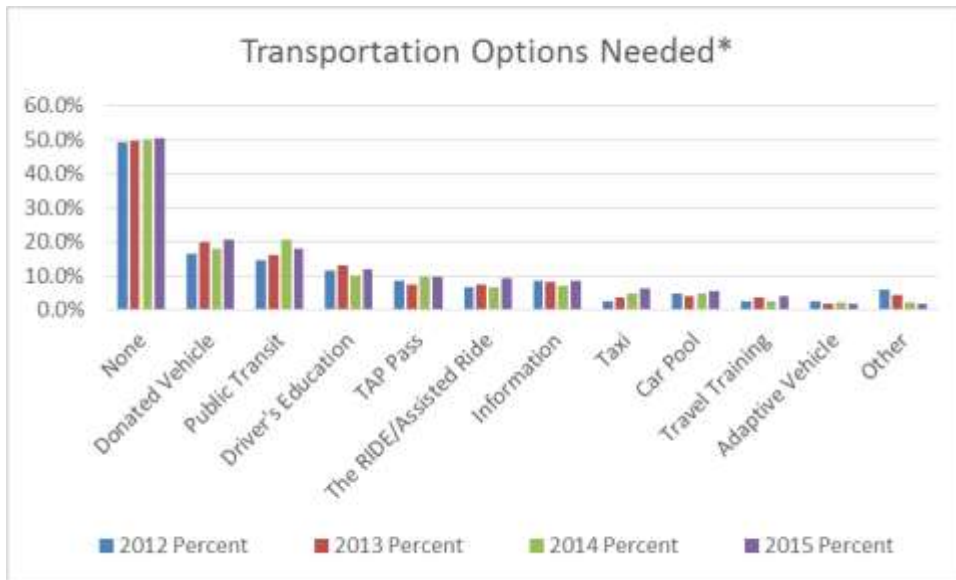
Answer Options	2015 Response Percent	Response Count	2014 Percent
Yes	30.4%	415	31.6%
No	69.6%	948	68.4%



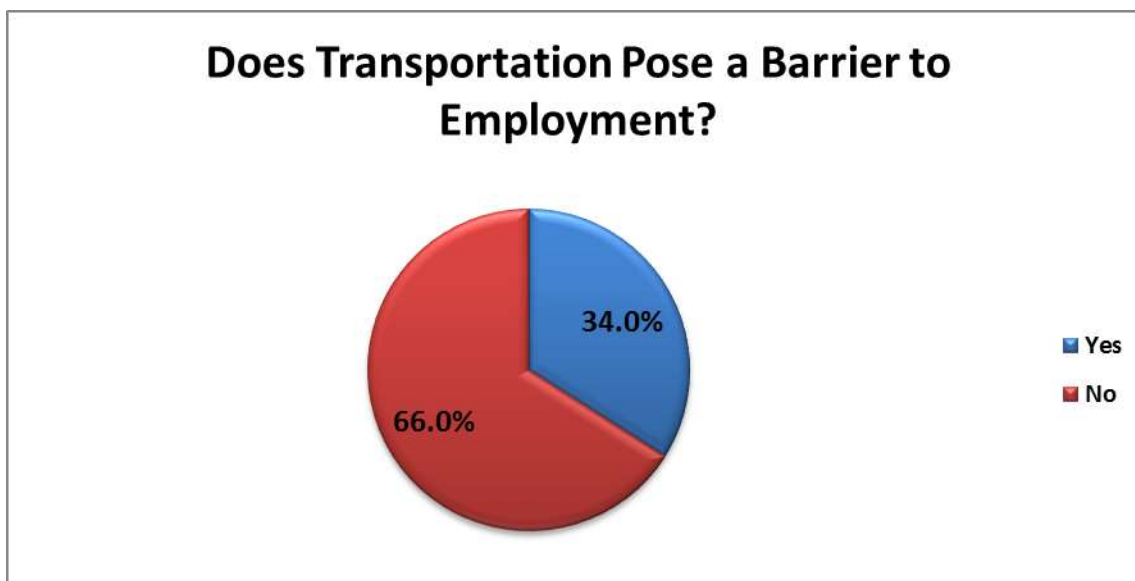
Transportation Options Currently Used*					
Need Area	2012 Percent	2013 Percent	2014 Percent	2015 Percent	4 Year Variance
Own Car	57.4%	55.7%	49.3%	51.4%	-6.0%
Public Transit	46.3%	44.0%	47.7%	42.8%	-3.5%
Walk	28.6%	26.6%	29.6%	31.6%	3.0%
Family/Friends	24.9%	24.6%	25.8%	30.6%	5.7%
Bike	8.2%	9.3%	10.2%	8.4%	0.2%
TAP Pass	6.4%	8.0%	8.9%	8.9%	2.5%
Taxi	6.5%	6.1%	8.3%	7.9%	1.4%
Car Pool/Ride Sharing	4.3%	4.8%	8.3%	7.9%	3.6%
RIDE/Assisted Van	5.9%	6.3%	5.8%	6.4%	0.5%
None	2.2%	3.4%	4.1%	4.2%	2.0%
Other	2.2%	1.3%	1.7%	1.2%	-1.0%
Adaptive Van	1.9%	1.1%	1.5%	1.0%	-0.9%
* Multiple Response Category: Percentages do not equal 100%					



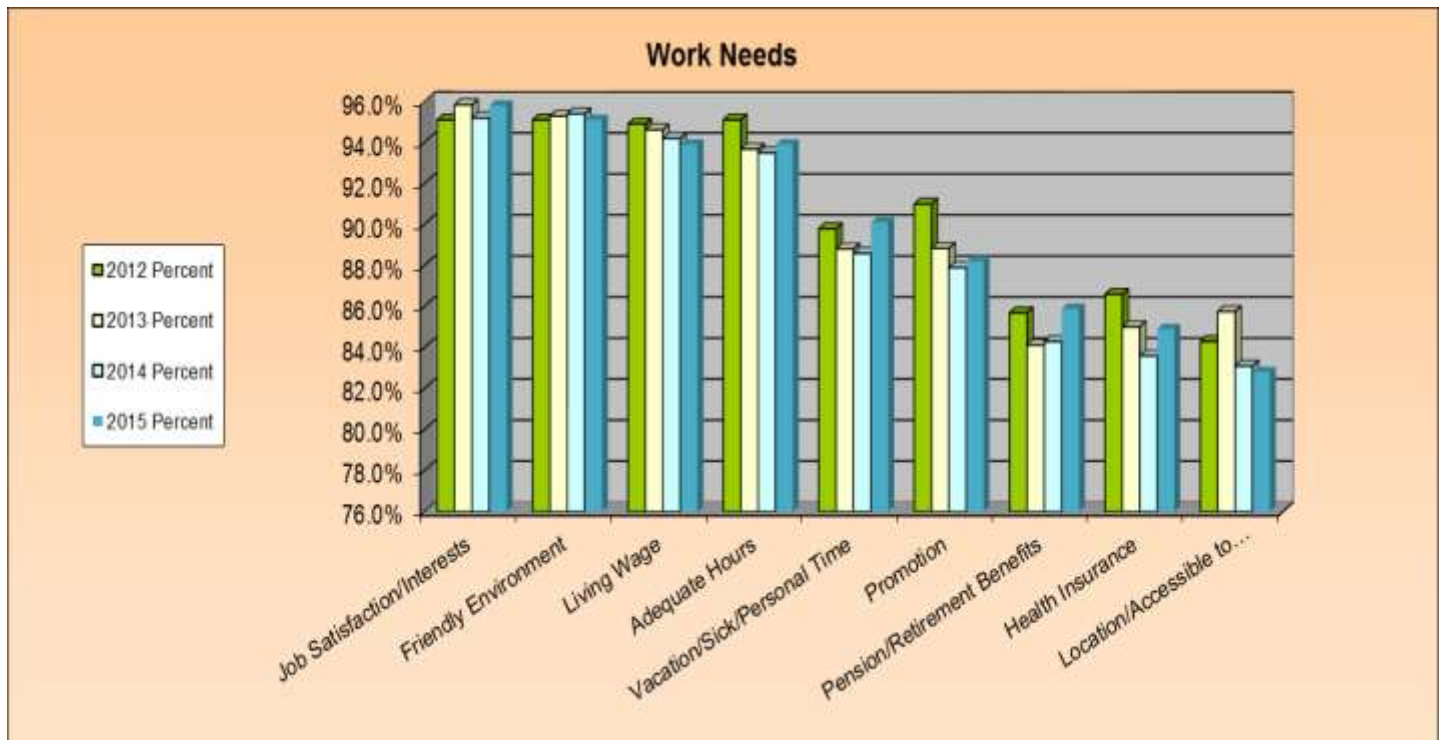
Transportation Options Needed*					
Need Area	2012 Percent	2013 Percent	2014 Percent	2015 Percent	4 Year Variance
None	49.3%	49.9%	50.1%	50.4%	1.1%
Donated Vehicle	16.6%	19.8%	17.9%	20.8%	4.2%
Public Transit	14.5%	16.3%	20.5%	18.2%	3.7%
Driver's Education	11.6%	13.1%	10.3%	12.1%	0.5%
TAP Pass	8.5%	7.5%	9.7%	9.8%	1.3%
The RIDE/Assisted Ride	6.6%	7.6%	6.7%	9.4%	2.8%
Information	8.5%	8.4%	7.2%	8.6%	0.1%
Taxi	2.5%	3.7%	4.8%	6.2%	3.7%
Car Pool	4.9%	4.0%	4.7%	5.6%	0.7%
Travel Training	2.4%	3.6%	2.7%	4.0%	1.6%
Adaptive Vehicle	2.4%	1.7%	2.2%	2.0%	-0.4%
Other	5.9%	4.3%	2.1%	2.0%	-3.9%
* Multiple Response Category: Percentages do not equal 100%					



Is transportation a barrier to you obtaining employment?				
Answer Options	2014 Response %	2014 Response #	2014 Percent	2013 Percent
Yes	34.0%	468	35.5%	32.4%
No	66.0%	909	64.5%	67.6%



Work Needs Respondents Answering Very or Somewhat Important					
Need Area	2012 Percent	2013 Percent	2014 Percent	2015 Percent	Variance
Job Satisfaction/Interests	95.1%	95.8%	95.2%	95.8%	0.7%
Friendly Environment	95.1%	95.3%	95.4%	95.1%	0.0%
Living Wage	94.9%	94.6%	94.2%	93.9%	-1.0%
Adequate Hours	95.1%	93.7%	93.5%	93.9%	-1.2%
Vacation/Sick/Personal Time	89.8%	88.8%	88.6%	90.1%	0.3%
Promotion	91.0%	88.8%	87.9%	88.2%	-2.8%
Pension/Retirement Benefits	85.7%	84.1%	84.3%	85.9%	0.2%
Health Insurance	86.6%	85.0%	83.6%	84.9%	-1.7%
Location/Accessible to Transportation	84.3%	85.8%	83.1%	82.8%	-1.5%

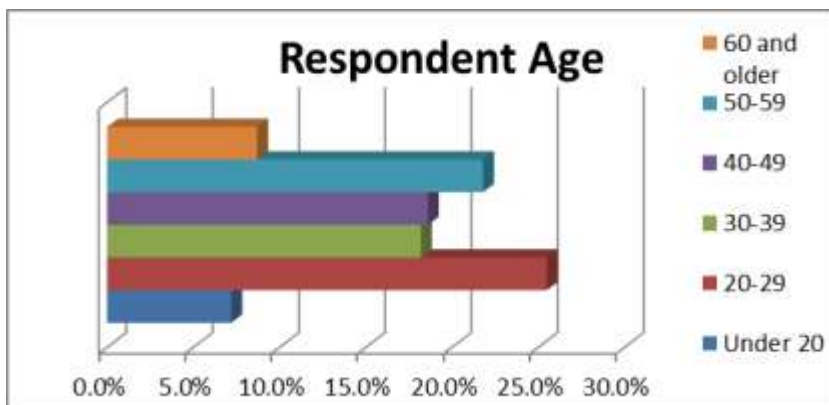


Consumer Occupational Areas of Interest as Indicated by Survey Response

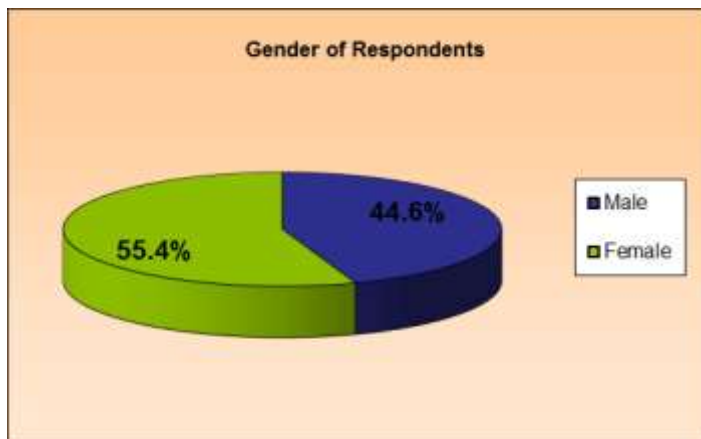
Occupational Area	% of Consumers Interested	# of Consumers Interested
Community/ Social/ Human Services	37.9%	575
Administrative	28.6%	435
Health Care	27.9%	424
Self-Employment	26.2%	398
Customer Service	24.4%	370
Computers/Information Technology	21.5%	326
Arts/Entertainment	21.4%	325
Education/Childcare	17.3%	263
Management	12.8%	195
Food Service	11.5%	175
Warehouse/Stock/Inventory	11.4%	173
Maintenance/Repair	11.1%	169
Retail	10.6%	161
Engineering/Science	10.2%	155
Financial	9.3%	141
Marketing/Sales	8.8%	133
Transportation	8.4%	127
Legal	7.4%	112
Manufacturing	7.3%	111
Other (please specify)	5.9%	89
Military/Law Enforcement/Safety	5.4%	82

Age Distribution of Respondents

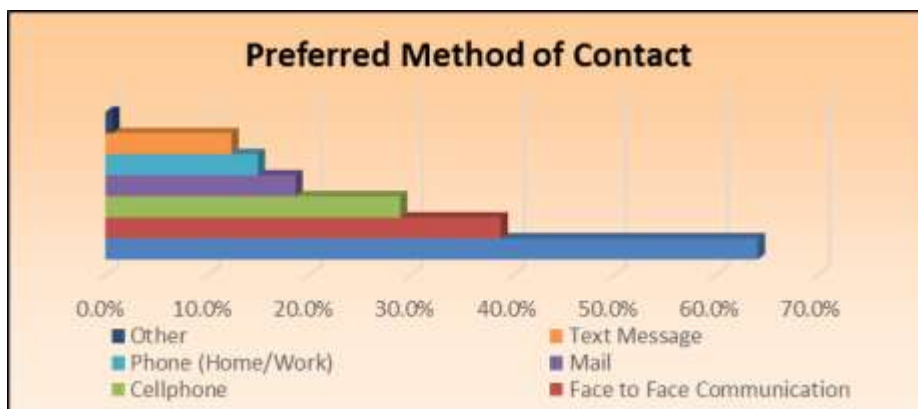
Age	2015 Percent	#
Under 20	7.2%	120
20-29	25.5%	422
30-39	18.2%	300
40-49	18.6%	309
50-59	21.8%	362
60 and older	8.7%	145



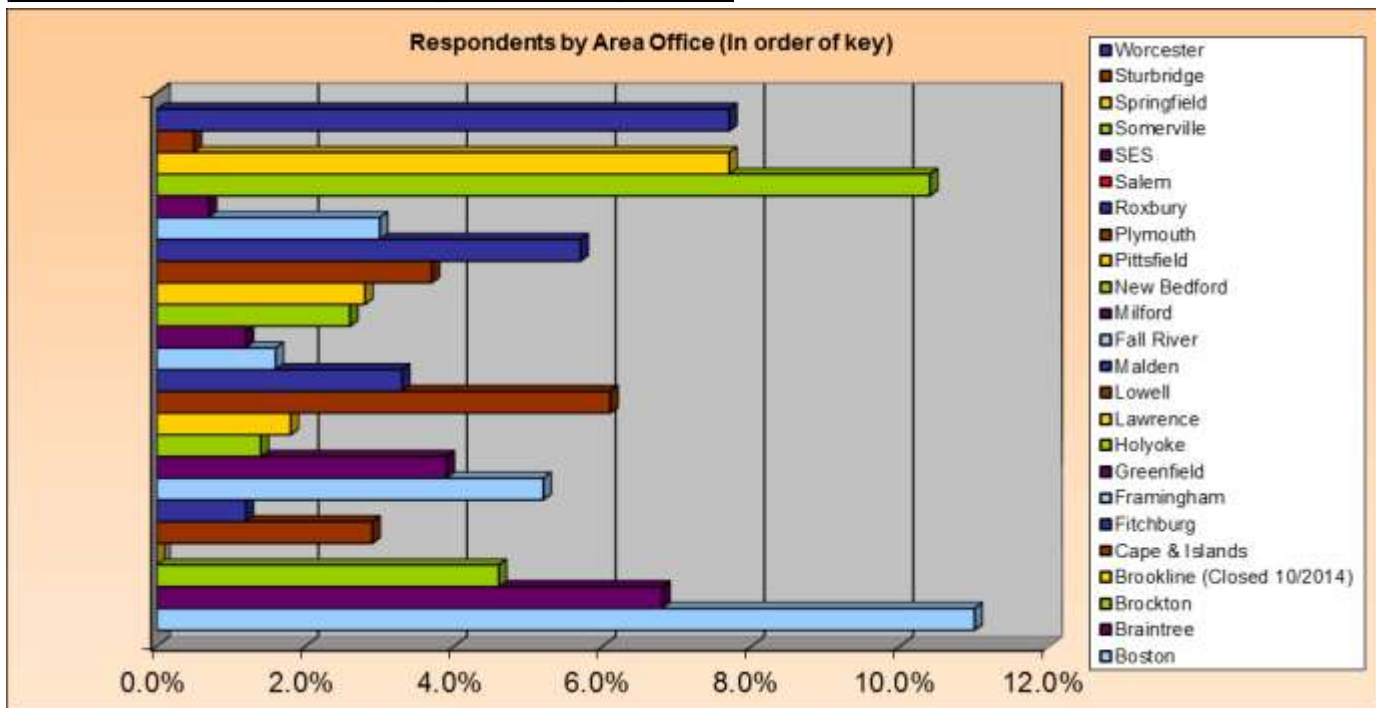
Gender of Respondents		
	2015 Percent	#
Male	44.6%	739
Female	55.4%	919



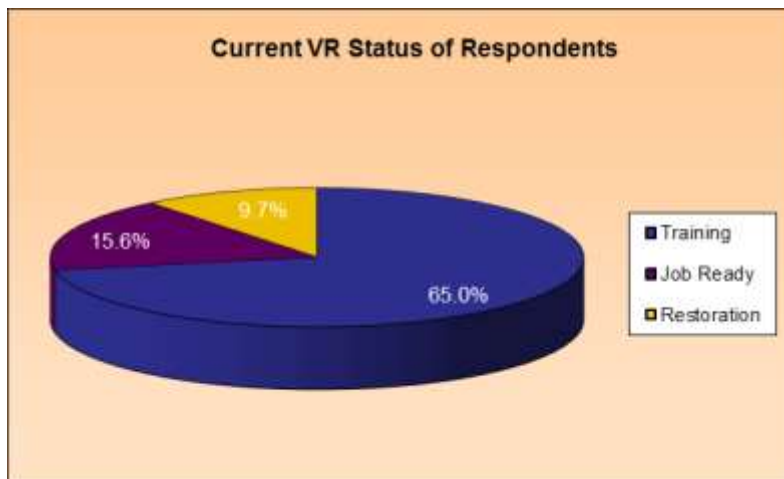
Preferred Method of Contact		
Contact Method	2015 Percent	#
Email	64.2%	1060
Face to Face Communication	38.9%	643
Cellphone	29.0%	479
Mail	18.7%	308
Phone (Home/Work)	15.0%	248
Text Message	12.4%	204
Other	0.7%	12



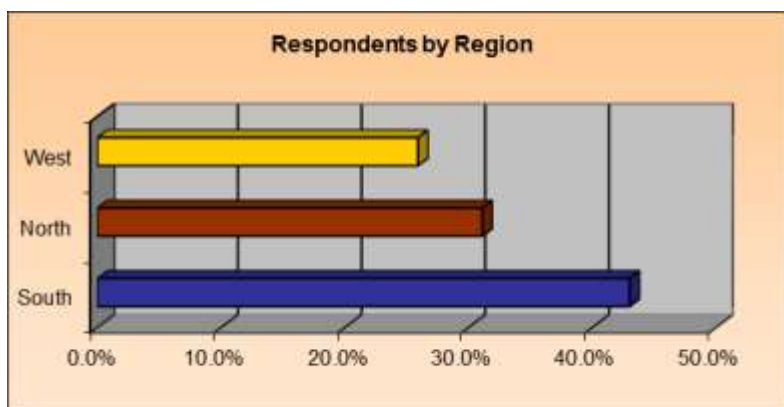
Respondents by Area Office		
	2015 Percent	#
Boston	11.0%	182
Braintree	6.8%	113
Brockton	4.6%	77
Brookline (Closed 10/2014)	0.0%	0
Cape & Islands	2.9%	48
Fall River	1.6%	27
Fitchburg	1.2%	20
Framingham	5.2%	87
Greenfield	3.9%	64
Holyoke	1.4%	22
Lawrence	1.8%	30
Lowell	6.1%	101
Malden	3.3%	55
Milford	1.2%	20
New Bedford	2.6%	43
Pittsfield	2.8%	46
Plymouth	3.7%	62
Roxbury	5.7%	95
Salem	3.0%	50
SES	0.7%	11
Somerville	10.4%	173
Springfield	7.7%	128
Sturbridge	0.5%	8
Taunton	4.0%	66
Worcester	7.7%	128



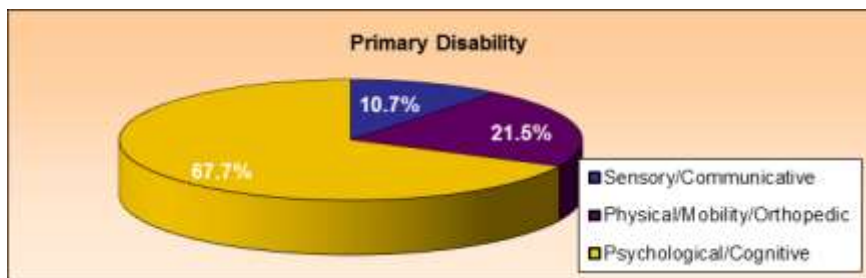
Current VR Status of Respondents		
Status	2015 Percent	#
Training	65.0%	1078
Job Ready	15.6%	259
Restoration	9.7%	161
Job Placement	4.0%	67
Interrupted Service	2.4%	39
IPE Completed	3.3%	54



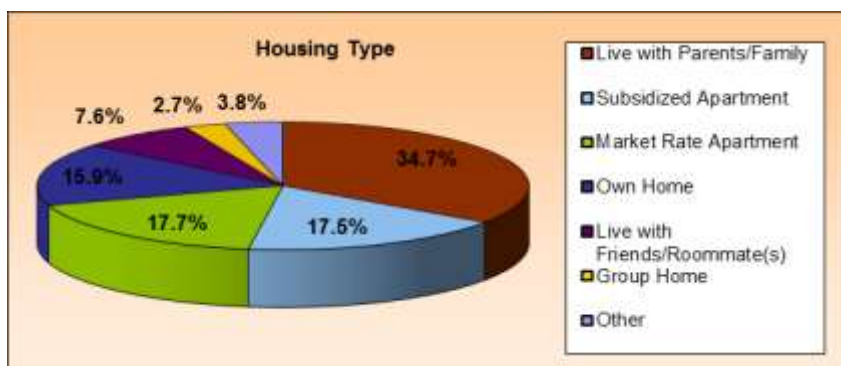
Respondents by Region		
	2015 Percent	#
South	43.0%	713
North	31.1%	516
West	25.9%	429



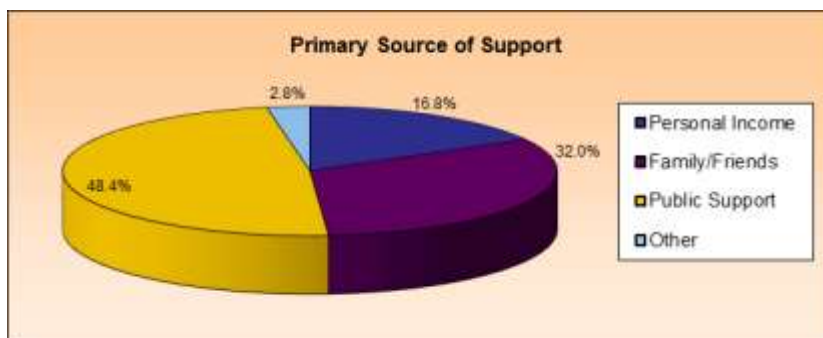
Primary Disability of Respondents		
Disability	2015 Percent	#
Sensory/Communicative	10.7%	178
Physical/Mobility/Orthopedic	21.5%	357
Psychological/Cognitive	67.7%	1123



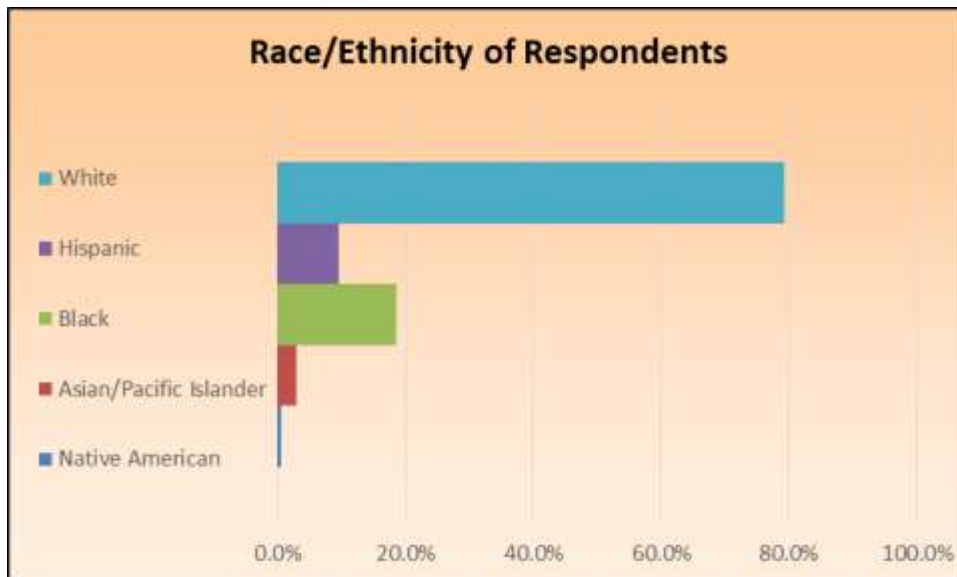
Current Housing of Respondents		
Housing Type	2015 Percent	#
Live with Parents/Family	34.7%	574
Subsidized Apartment	17.5%	289
Market Rate Apartment	17.7%	293
Own Home	15.9%	262
Live with Friends/Roommate(s)	7.6%	126
Group Home	2.7%	45
Other	3.8%	63



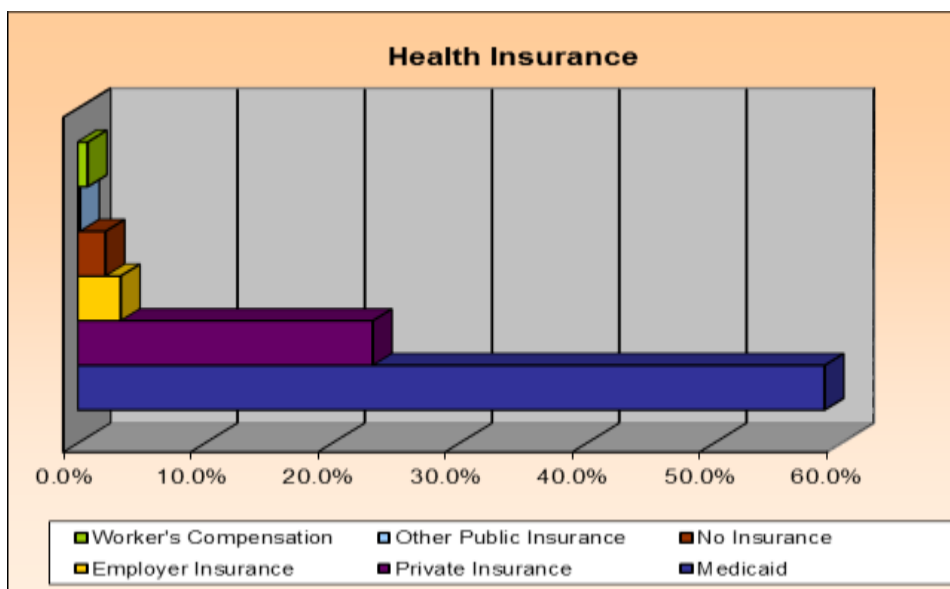
Respondents' Primary Source of Support		
	2015 Percent	#
Personal Income	16.8%	278
Family/Friends	32.0%	530
Public Support	48.4%	803
Other	2.8%	47



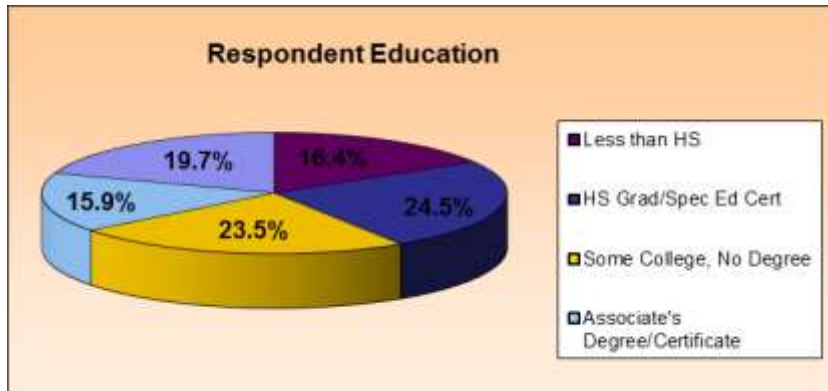
Race/Ethnicity of Respondents		
Race/Ethnicity	2015 Percent	#
Native American	0.6%	10
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.0%	50
Black	18.5%	307
Hispanic	9.5%	157
White	79.3%	1315



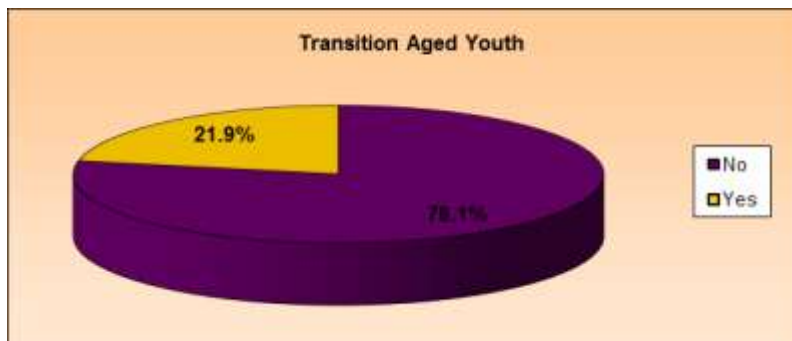
Health Insurance Type at Application		
Insurance	2015 Percent	#
Medicaid	58.7%	973
Private Insurance	23.2%	385
Medicare	22.4%	371
Employer Insurance	3.4%	56
No Insurance	2.2%	37
Other Public Insurance	0.2%	3
Worker's Compensation	0.8%	13



Education of Respondents at Application		
	2015 Percent	#
Less than HS	16.4%	272
HS Grad/Spec Ed Cert	24.5%	406
Some College, No Degree	23.5%	390
Associate's Degree/Certificate	15.9%	264
Bachelor's/ Post Grad. Degree	19.7%	326



Transition Aged Youth 16-24		
	2015 Percent	#
No	78.1%	1295
Yes	21.9%	363



MRC Referral Source		
Referral Source	2015	#
Self-Referral	38.5%	638
Other Sources	18.8%	311
Elementary/Secondary School	13.5%	224
Community Rehabilitation Provider/Program	8.1%	135
Public or Private Medical Health Provider	7.9%	131
College/University	2.8%	46
Career Center	2.7%	45
Public or Private Mental Health Provider	2.5%	41
Family/Friends	2.1%	35
Social Security Administration	1.3%	21
State Welfare Agency (DTA)	0.8%	14
Veterans Administration	0.4%	7
Other State Agencies	0.4%	7
Consumer Organizations/Advocacy Groups	0.2%	3

How long have you been receiving services from MRC?		
Answer Options	2015 #	%
Less than 1 year	31.8%	522
1 to 2 years	32.3%	530
2 to 4 years	23.8%	390
5 to 9 years	8.0%	132
10 years or more	4.1%	67

Open Ended Responses: Other Services Needed	
Need	# of Responses
Affordable, Accessible Housing	38
Job Search Assistance/Networking	28
Financial Assistance	18
Job Placement Services	18
Information About Available Services	16
MRC Counseling	13
Job Training/Education	12
Transportation	12
Other Supportive Services (DMH, DDS, etc.)	10
Mental Health Counseling	10
Assistive Technology	9
Donated Vehicle Program	6
Budgeting Assistance/Classes	6
Social/Recreation Opportunities	5
Improved MRC Employer Partnerships	5
Self-Employment/Assistance Starting a Business	4
Health Insurance/Information about Health Care	4
CORI Support	4
Home Care Services	4
Support Groups	4
Home Accessibility Modifications	4
Child Care	4
Computer Skills Training	4
Counseling in Post-Secondary Education	4
Job Coaching	3
Benefits Planning	3
Communication with MRC	3
Services from Independent Living Centers	2
Ongoing Support Services	2
Soft Skills Training	2
Coordination with Other Agencies	1
LD/ADHD Services	1
Coordination with College Disability Office	1
Family Counseling	1
TAP Pass	1
Service Dog	1
ASL Classes	1
Consumer Advocates	1
LGBT Support	1

Open Ended Responses: Most Important Service Not Receiving	
Need	# of Responses
Job Placement Services	74
Education/Job Training	63
Affordable/Accessible Housing	55
Career Counseling/Job Search Assistance	49
MRC Counseling and Guidance	33
Transportation	32
Financial Assistance/Public Support	31
Donated Vehicle Program	27
Tuition Assistance/Waiver	22
Services from Other Agencies	21
Information on Services	19
Driver's Education	14
Other	13
Job Readiness Training/Soft Skills	12
Benefits Planning	11
School/Work Supplies	11
Assistive Technology	10
Meeting with Counselor	9
Mental Health Counseling	8
Transportation Access Pass	8
Independent Living Services	7
Self-Employment Assistance	7
Home Care Services	6
Job Coaching	6
On-The-Job Training/Job Driven Training Programs	6
Adaptive Vehicle	4
Health Care	4
Internships/Work Based Learning Experiences	4
Legal/CORI Assistance	4
Ongoing Support Services	4
Vocational Assessment	4
Budgeting Assistance/Financial Planning	4
Employer Networking	4
Child Care	3
Support Groups	2
Social/Recreational/Networking Opportunities	2
Tutoring Services	2
Travel Training	2
ASL Interpreter	1
Web-Based Training	1
Brain Injury Services	1
Speech Therapy	1

Open Ended Responses: Most Important Service Receiving	
Most Important Service Received	# of Responses
Education/Job Training	166
Tuition Assistance/Waiver	150
Job Search/Placement	146
MRC Counseling & Guidance	122
Not Receiving Services	71
Did Not Specify	52
Assistive Technology	49
Financial Assistance/Support	33
Job Readiness Training	33
School/Work Supplies	27
Transportation Services	23
Affordable, Accessible Housing	14
Case Management/Services from Other Agencies and Providers	13
Job Coaching	13
Adaptive Vehicle/Vehicle Modification	9
Vocational Assessment	8
Assistance Starting a Business/Self-Employment	7
Benefits Planning	7
Ongoing Employment Support Services	7
Driver Education	5
Independent Living Services	4
Information on Services	4
On-The-Job Training	4
Tutoring	4
Job Driven Training Programs (CVS, etc.)	3
Internship Experience	3
Job Club	3
Manpower TDC	3
Referral to Other Services	3
CORI Assistance	2
Donated Vehicle Program	2
Transition from High School to School and Work	2
ASL Speciality Counselor	1
Home Care Services	1
LD/ADHD Support Group	1
Individual Consumer Consultant Program	1
Physical Restoration	1
Speech Therapy	1

Open Ended Responses: Reasons for Why Transportation Is A Barrier to Employment	
Reason	# of Responses
No Access to Jobs in Areas Without Transportation	62
Cost of Transportation/Cost of Maintaining a Vehicle	43
Reliability/Time to Travel on Public Transit/The RIDE	43
Distance to Jobs/Location	40
Not A Barrier	37
Need Driver's Education/Need Driver's License	31
Need a Car	30
Health Conditions/Nature of Disability	26
Available Jobs Require a Car	25
Must Rely on Others for Transportation	21
Sometimes/Potentially a Barrier	18
Other	18
Fear of Driving/Using Public Transit	8
Lost License Because of DUI	4
Only Can Telecommute	4
MRC Addressed Transportation Needs	3
Need Travel Training	3
No Parking Available	2
Weather Conditions	1

RSA Disability Impairment	High Level Disability Category
Blindness	Sensory/Communicative
Other Visual Impairments	Sensory/Communicative
Deafness, Primary Communication Visual	Sensory/Communicative
Deafness, Primary Communication Auditory	Sensory/Communicative
Hearing Loss, Primary Communication Visual	Sensory/Communicative
Hearing Loss, Primary Communication Auditory	Sensory/Communicative
Other Hearing Impairments (Tinnitus, Meniere's Disease, hyperacusis, etc.)	Sensory/Communicative
Deaf - Blindness	Sensory/Communicative
Communicative Impairments (expressive/receptive)	Sensory/Communicative
Mobility Orthopedic/Neurological Impairments	Physical/Orthopedic
Manipulation/Dexterity Orthopedic/Neurological Impairments	Physical/Orthopedic
Both mobility and Manipulation/Dexterity Orthopedic/Neurological Impairments	Physical/Orthopedic
Other Orthopedic Impairments (e.g., limited range of motion)	Physical/Orthopedic
Respiratory Impairments	Physical/Orthopedic
General Physical Debilitation (fatigue, weakness, pain, etc.)	Physical/Orthopedic
Other Physical Impairments (not listed above)	Physical/Orthopedic
Cognitive Impairments (impairments involving learning, thinking, processing information and concentration)	Psychological/Cognitive
Psychosocial Impairments (interpersonal and behavioral impairments, difficulty coping)	Psychological/Cognitive
Other Mental Impairments	Psychological/Cognitive

Year in Review
July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

**Massachusetts Rehabilitation
Commission**

3,737 citizens with disabilities have been successfully placed into competitive employment based on their choices, interests, needs and skills.

The earnings of these rehabilitated employees in MA in the first year were \$67.5 million.

Estimated public benefits savings from people rehabilitated in MA were \$28 million.

Average Hourly Wage	\$12.98
Average Work Hours Weekly	26.8

*The returns to society based on increases in lifetime earnings range from \$14 to \$18 for each \$1 invested in the MRC Vocational Rehabilitation program.

*\$5 is returned to the government in the form of increased taxes and reduced public assistance payments for every \$1 invested in the MRC Vocational Rehabilitation program.

**Based on 2004 Commonwealth Corporation Study.*

**Who Are Our
Consumers?**

Psychiatric Disabilities	39.8%
Substance Abuse	8.8%
Orthopedic Disabilities	11.6%
Learning Disabilities	22.2%
Developmental Disabilities	2.3%
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	6.7%
Neurological Disabilities	2.7%
Traumatic Brain Injury	1.7%
Other Disabilities	8.5%

Average Age	33.5
-------------	------

Female	47%
Male	53%

Asian/Pacific Islander	3.6%
Black	17.1%
Hispanic	10.9%
Native American	0.9%
White	79.9%

FACTS AT A GLANCE

The goal of our services is to promote dignity through employment and community living, one person at a time. We hope all citizens with disabilities in Massachusetts will have the opportunity to contribute as a productive member of their community and family as a result of services provided by the MRC.

Consumers actively receiving services	23,611
Consumers enrolled in training/education programs	16,074
Consumers with disabilities competitively employed	100%/3,737
Consumers employed with medical insurance	96.0%
Consumers satisfied with services	84.0%

Mission:

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) promotes equality, empowerment and independence of individuals with disabilities. These goals are achieved through enhancing and encouraging personal choice and the right to succeed or fail in the pursuit of independence and employment in the community.

Vision:

The MRC provides comprehensive services to people with disabilities that maximize their quality of life and economic self-sufficiency in the community.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Division

The MRC Vocational Rehabilitation Program and the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind serve eligible individuals with disabilities who are available and able to attain employment as a result of vocational rehabilitation services.

The MRC Vocational Rehabilitation Program is the federal-state vocational rehabilitation program focused on assisting individuals with disability(s) to become employed. Some of the MRC-VR services provided include:

- 1) Vocational counseling, guidance and assistance in job placement;
- 2) Training programs, including college if appropriate, to attain competitive employment;
- 3) Rehabilitation technology services;
- 4) Job coach services;
- 5) Community based employment services;
- 6) Job Placement.

What MRC Consumers Have To Say

- “The staff were extremely professional, helpful, understanding and gave me hope. I would not be working in the position I have today without the help of the MRC.”
7)
- “My counselor is the best, she understands me and gets the job done. She knows I'm a hard worker and I'll do anything to better my future.”
8)
- “MRC gave me back my life. After devastating amputations prevented me from working and driving, MRC told me I could do both again, and they found me a job as well as paid for my adaptive automobile equipment. I am so very grateful to MRC.”
9)
- “My counselor was so supportive and professional. I could not have done this without her.”
10)
- “The MRC have staff will literally do ANYTHING to help those who need their services. I am brimming with gratitude for all they did for me and feel so fortunate to have been able to receive their services.
11)
- “I was very satisfied with the services at MRC. MRC is an excellent resource for the disabled.”

Year in Review
July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Consumers Served Community Living Programs	
Independent Living Centers*:	6,679
Turning 22 Services:	643
Assistive Technology:	2,062
Housing Registry:	397
Supported Living Services:	189
Brain Injury Services:	1,409
Home Care Services:	1,285
Protective Services:	448
ABI-N/MFP-CL Waivers:	244

Services Purchased Community Living Programs	
Independent Living Centers:	\$7,136,540
IL Turning 22 Services:	\$1,607,386
Assistive Technology:	\$1,210,761
Housing Registry:	\$80,000
Supported Living Services:	\$1,687,720
Brain Injury Services:	\$32,049,884
Home Care Services:	\$3,414,031
Protective Services:	\$741,375

**State Funded Services Only*

FACTS AT A GLANCE

The goal of our services is to promote dignity through employment and community living, one person at a time. We hope all citizens with disabilities in Massachusetts will have the opportunity to contribute as a productive member of their community and family as a result of services provided by the MRC.

Total consumers actively receiving services:	13,356
Total funds expended:	\$47,928,057
Cost per consumer served:	\$3,588.50

Mission:

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) promotes equality, empowerment and independence of individuals with disabilities. These goals are achieved through enhancing and encouraging personal choice and the right to succeed or fail in the pursuit of independence and employment in the community.

Vision:

The MRC provides comprehensive services to people with disabilities that maximize their quality of life and economic self-sufficiency in the community.

Community Living (CL) Division:

The MRC Community Living Division is comprised of a variety of programs, supports, and services that address the diverse needs of adults and transition age youth with disabilities to fulfill their desire/need for community integration, to gain maximum control of their destiny, and to participate fully in their community.

Independent Living Center Services
Community Supported Living Services
Accessible Housing Registry
Home Care Assistance Program for Eligible Adults with Disabilities
Turning 22 Youth Transition to Adult Human Services
Assistive Technology Training and Devices
Community-Based Residential, Day and Support Services for Persons with Brain Injuries

What our Consumers Say...

"I would not be able to maintain my life without the assistance of HCAP. I am very grateful for the assistance that keeps me healthy and maintain independent living." – *Home Care Consumer*

"I'm very satisfied with SHIP services. Everyone has been great and my service coordinator is terrific with providing information." – *TBI Waiver Consumer*

"MRC is a very caring place. They really care about their consumers and they go beyond their line of duty of service." – *Home Care Consumer*

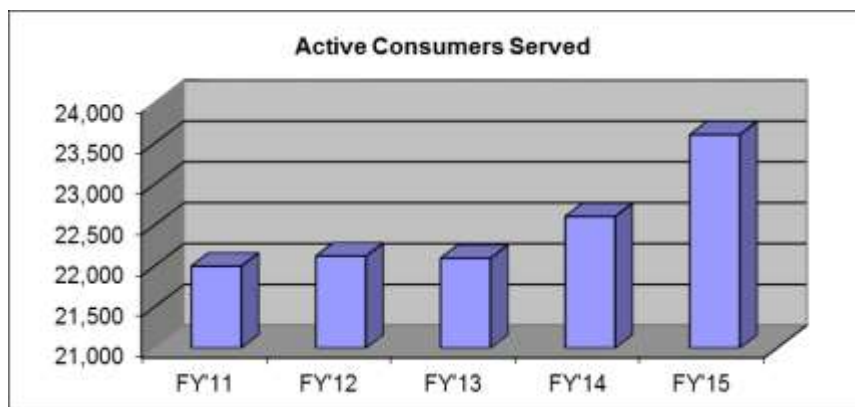
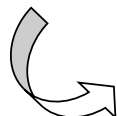
"One of my dreams is to be able to do my graphic work...you have opened that door for me." – *SHIP Consumer*

"It's like a huge weight has been lifted from my shoulders both physically and figuratively. This [Home Care Assistance Program] has made such a difference in my life allowing me to rehabilitate rather than strain and injure. Can't thank you enough!" – *Home Care Consumer*

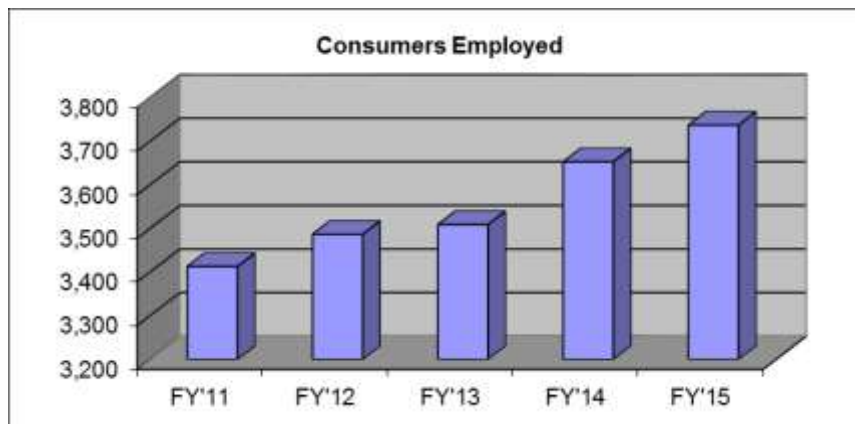
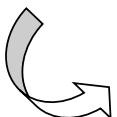
"I am impressed with my case manager's ability to advocate on my behalf. Thanks so much for assisting me with feelings of self-worth and for consistent support with all the changes and assistance I need." – *Home Care Consumer*

VR Historical Years in Review SFY 2011-2015

Active Consumers Served*	
FY'11	22,003
FY'12	22,126
FY'13	22,100
FY'14	22,609
FY'15	23,611



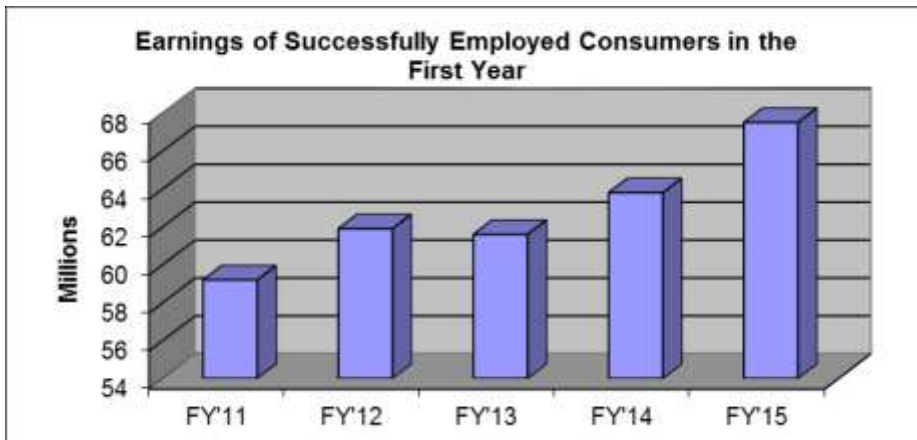
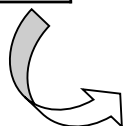
Consumers Employed	
FY'11	3,413
FY'12	3,487
FY'13	3,509
FY'14	3,653
FY'15	3,737



*Consumers receiving an array of services including: Counseling, Guidance, Rehabilitation, Skills Training, College, Assistive Technology, Benefits Planning and Job Placement Services. These services are designed to assist them in their efforts to choose, obtain and maintain employment in the competitive labor market based on their interests, skills and abilities.

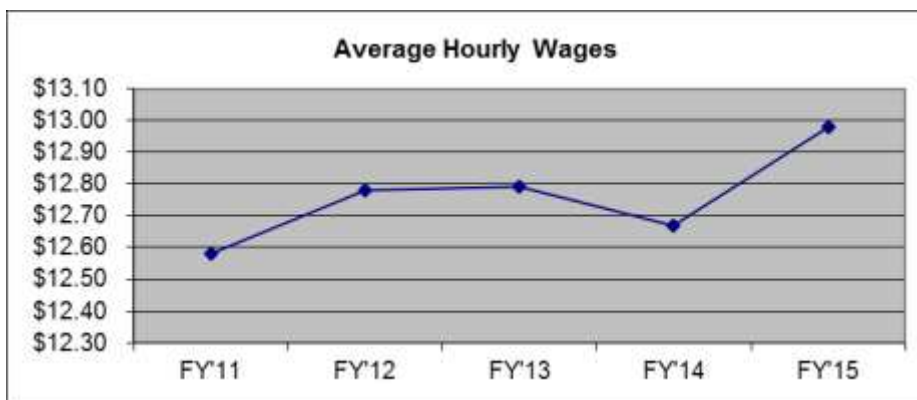
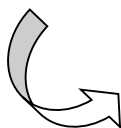
Earnings of Successfully Employed Consumers in 1st Year (in Millions)

FY'11	59.2
FY'12	61.9
FY'13	61.6
FY'14	63.8
FY'15	67.5



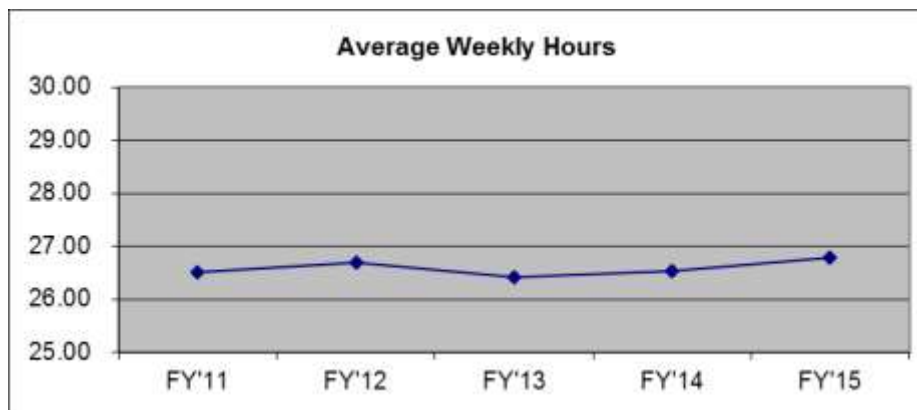
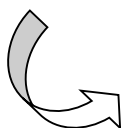
Average Hourly Wages

FY'11	\$12.58
FY'12	\$12.78
FY'13	\$12.79
FY'14	\$12.67
FY'15	\$12.98



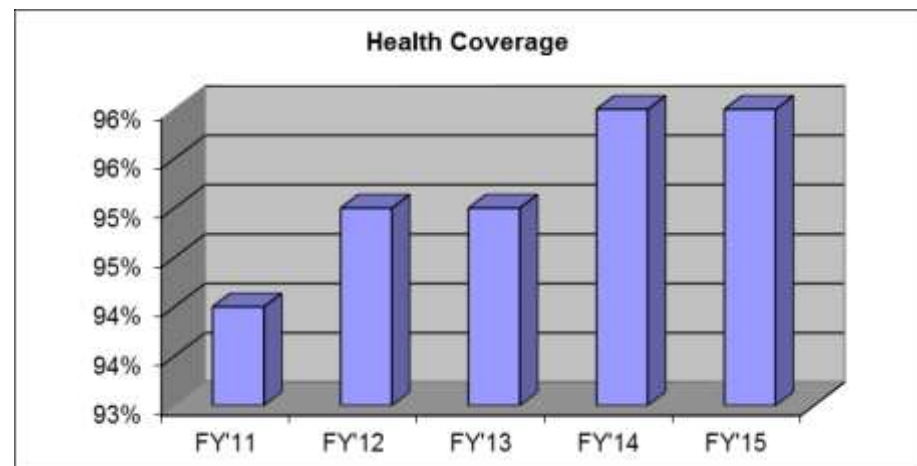
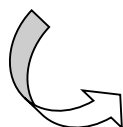
Average Weekly Hours

FY'11	26.51
FY'12	26.70
FY'13	26.42
FY'14	26.52
FY'15	26.78

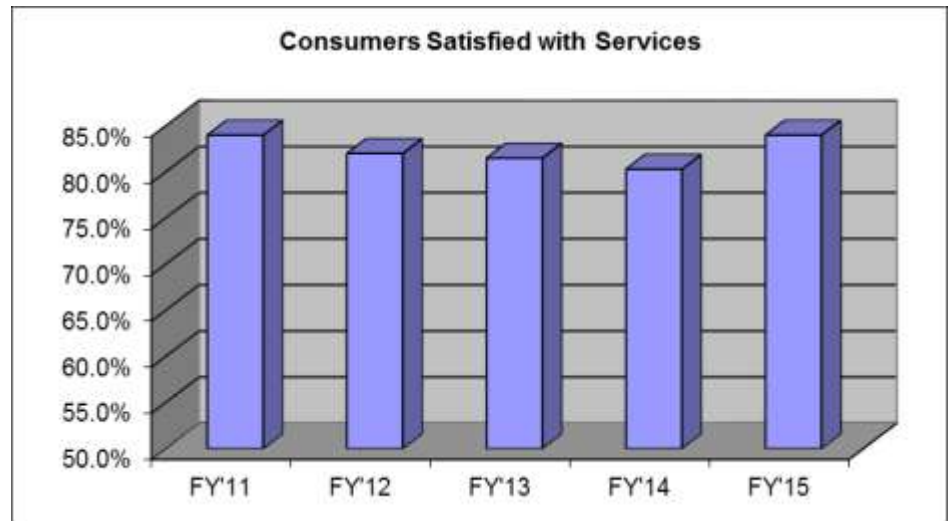
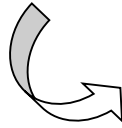


Health Coverage

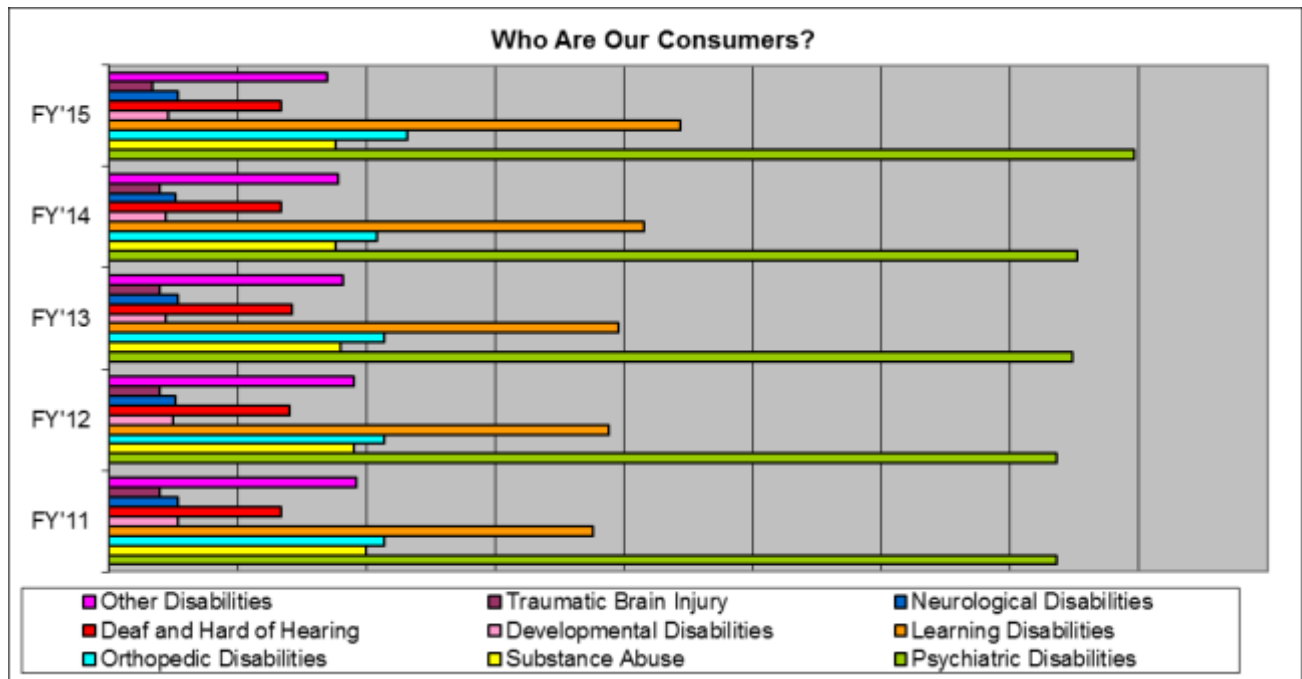
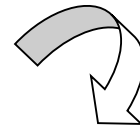
FY'11	94%
FY'12	95%
FY'13	95%
FY'14	96%
FY'15	96%



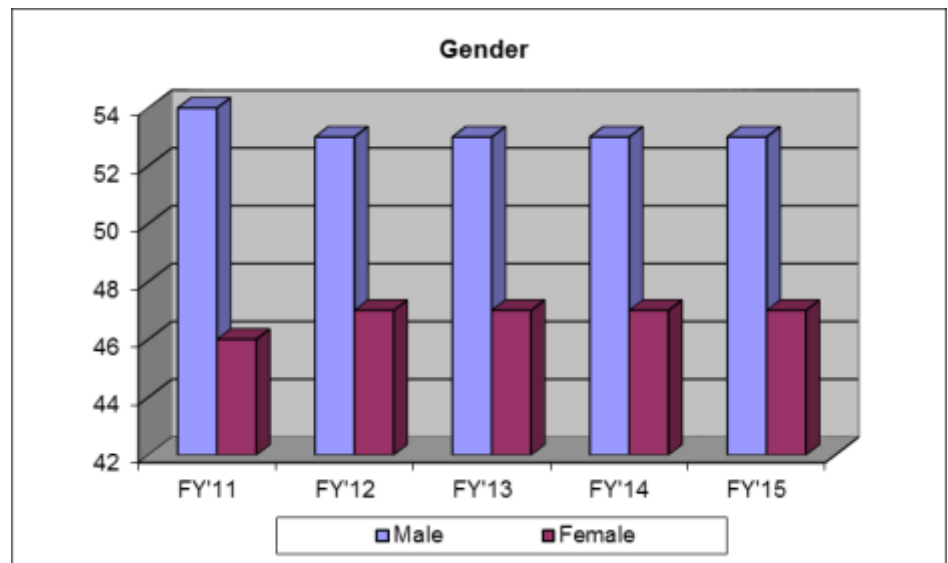
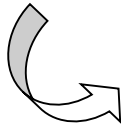
Consumers Satisfied With Services	
FY'11	84.0%
FY'12	82.0%
FY'13	81.5%
FY'14	80.3%
FY'15	84.0%



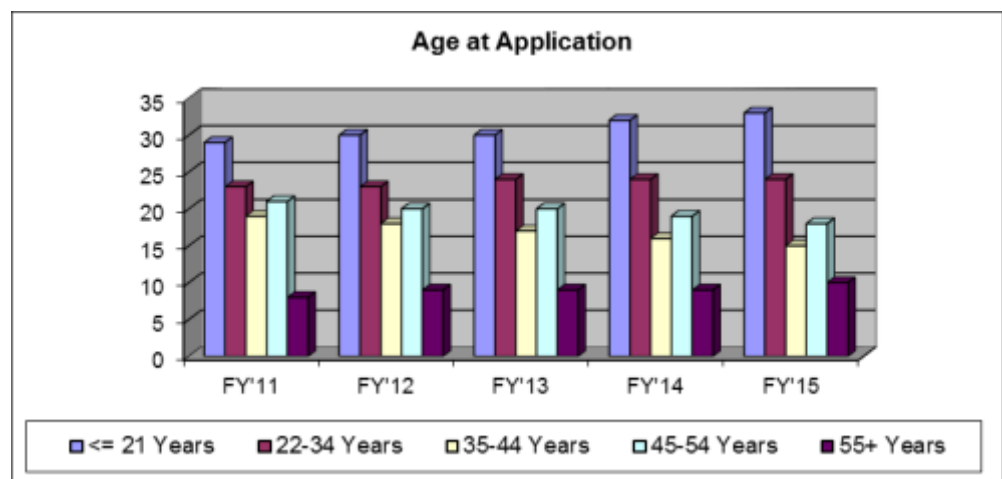
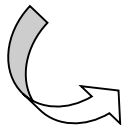
Who Are Our Consumers?					
	FY'11	FY'12	FY'13	FY'14	FY'15
Psychiatric Disabilities	36.80%	36.80%	37.40%	37.60%	39.80%
Substance Abuse	10.00%	9.50%	9.00%	8.80%	8.80%
Orthopedic Disabilities	10.70%	10.70%	10.70%	10.40%	11.60%
Learning Disabilities	18.80%	19.40%	19.80%	20.80%	22.20%
Developmental Disabilities	2.70%	2.50%	2.20%	2.20%	2.30%
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	6.70%	7.00%	7.10%	6.70%	6.70%
Neurological Disabilities	2.70%	2.60%	2.70%	2.60%	2.70%
Traumatic Brain Injury	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	1.70%
Other Disabilities	9.60%	9.50%	9.10%	8.90%	8.50%



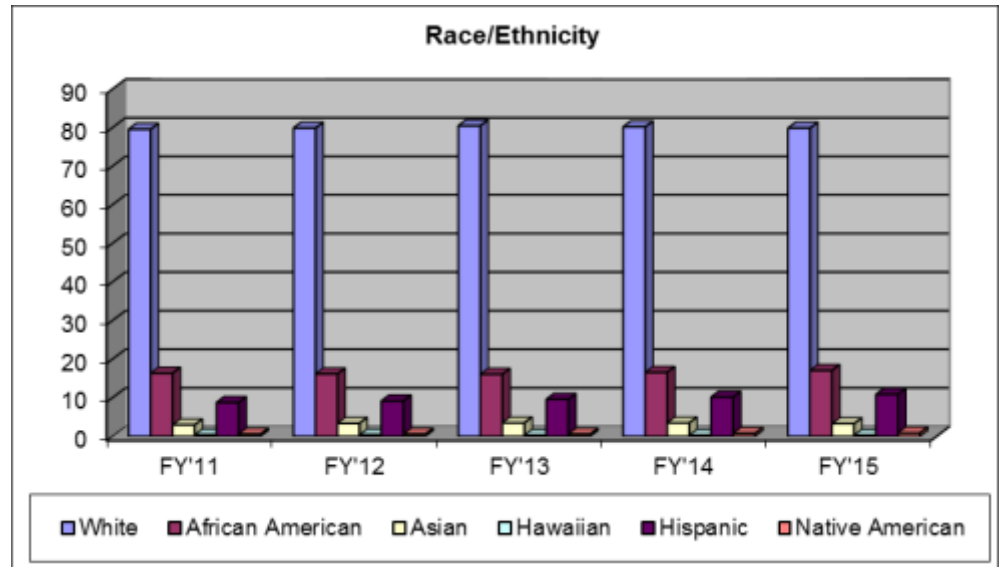
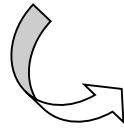
Gender		
	Male	Female
FY'11	54	46
FY'12	53	47
FY'13	53	47
FY'14	53	47
FY'15	53	47



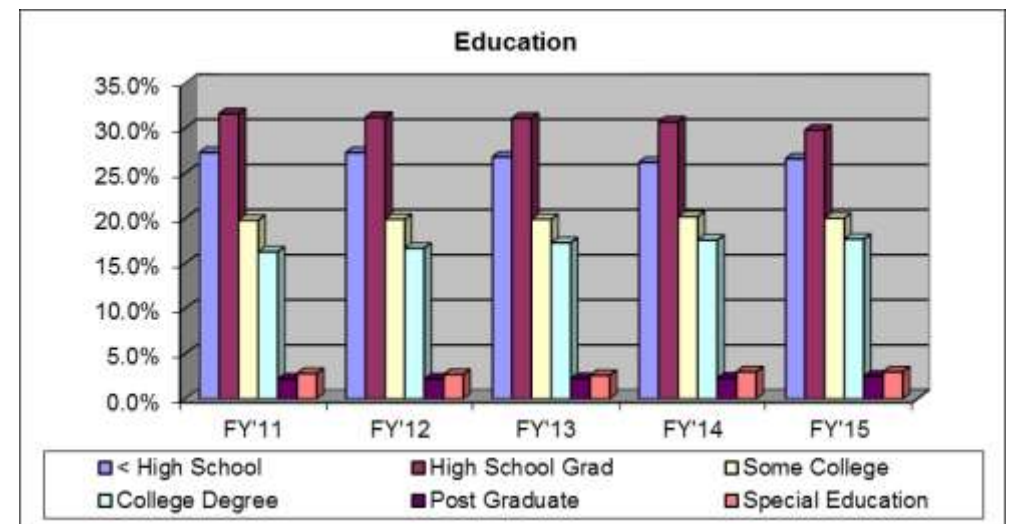
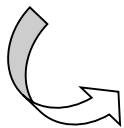
Age at Application					
	FY'11	FY'12	FY'13	FY'14	FY'15
<= 21 Years	29	30	30	32	33
22-34 Years	23	23	24	24	24
35-44 Years	19	18	17	16	15
45-54 Years	21	20	20	19	18
55+ Years	8	9	9	9	10



Race/ Ethnicity					
	FY'11	FY'12	FY'13	FY'14	FY'15
White	79.6	79.9	80.5	80.2	79.9
African American	16.4	16.2	16.1	16.6	17.1
Asian	3	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.3
Hawaiian	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3
Hispanic	8.8	9.2	9.6	10.2	10.9
Native American	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.9



Education					
	FY'11	FY'12	FY'13	FY'14	FY'15
< High School	27.3%	27.3%	26.8%	26.2%	26.6%
High School Grad	31.6%	31.2%	31.1%	30.7%	29.8%
Some College	19.8%	19.9%	19.9%	20.2%	20.0%
College Degree	16.3%	16.7%	17.3%	17.6%	17.7%
Post Graduate	2.2%	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%	2.5%
Special Education	2.8%	2.7%	2.6%	3.0%	3.0%





VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

Economic Impact Fact Sheet Return on Investment (ROI) July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission – Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Individuals with disabilities successfully placed into competitive employment:	3,737
Average Hourly Wage for Employed Consumers:	\$12.98
Average Work Hours per Week for Employed Consumers:	26.8
Total Annual Earnings for Consumers Placed into Employment:	\$67,546,877
Estimated Public Benefits savings from Employed Consumers:	\$28,027,500
Projected Annual Massachusetts Income Tax Paid by Employed Consumers:	\$2,266,246
Projected Annual Federal Income Tax Paid by Employed Consumers:	\$4,400,478
Consumers placed into employment with medical insurance:	96.0%
Return to society based on increase in lifetime earnings for consumers placed into employment, FY2015*:	\$835,679,446
Return to society based on returns to government in the form of increased taxes and reduced public assistance payments, FY2015**:	\$298,456,945

**Based on Commonwealth Corporation Study on ROI that \$14 is returned to society based on increases in lifetime earnings for each \$1 invested in the MRC Vocational Rehabilitation program.*

***Based on Commonwealth Corporation Study on ROI that \$5 is returned to the government for each \$1 invested in the MRC Vocational Rehabilitation program.*

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

MRC promotes equality, empowerment and productive independence of individuals with disabilities. These goals are achieved through enhancing and encouraging personal choice and risk-taking for independence and employment.

**TOP 10 JOBS AND OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES ON IPE, IN PLACEMENT, AND IN
SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT, SFY2015, WITH DEMAND FACTOR AND MEDIAN HOURLY
WAGE FOR MASSACHUSETTS, 2014**

TOP 10 JOBS

IPE

SOC Code	Top 10 Jobs Written on IPEs	LQ*	Median Wage
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistant	2.03	\$14.96
21-1011	Substance Abuse Counselor	1.71	\$18.77
41-2031	Retail Sales	1.01	\$10.68
43-5081	Stock and Order Clerks	.98	\$11.41
21-1099	Community and Social Services Specialist	.74	\$16.62
31-1014	Nursing Assistant	1.16	\$14.02
15-1199	Miscellaneous Computer Occupations	.90	\$44.43
43-9199	Misc. Office & Administrative Support Workers	.48	\$23.43
41-9099	Sales and Related Workers	.46	\$24.34
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	.87	\$15.99
Total	Average	1.03	\$19.47

Placement

SOC Code	Top 10 Jobs for Initial Placement	LQ*	Median Wage
41-2032	Retail Sales	1.01	\$10.68
43-5081	Stock and Order Clerks	.98	\$11.41
41-9099	Sales and Related Workers	.46	\$24.34
41-2011	Cashiers	.82	\$9.70
31-1014	Nursing Assistant	1.16	\$14.02
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners	1.02	\$14.48
35-9099	Misc. Food Preparation and Serving Workers	.71	\$16.85
35-2021	Food Preparation	.96	\$10.85
31-1011	Home Health Aides	1.07	\$12.86
43-4051	Customer Service Representative	.87	\$18.21
Total	Average	.91	\$14.34

Successful Employment

SOC Code	Top 10 Jobs for Successful Employment Outcomes	LQ*	Median Wage
41-2031	Retail Sales	1.01	\$10.68
43-5081	Stock and Order Clerks	.98	\$11.41
41-2011	Cashiers	.82	\$9.70
41-9099	Sales and Related Workers	.46	\$24.34
31-1014	Nursing Assistant	1.16	\$14.02
35-9099	Misc. Food Preparation and Serving Workers	.71	\$16.85
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners	1.02	\$14.48
35-2021	Food Preparation	.96	\$10.85
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	2.03	\$14.96
31-1011	Home Health Aides	1.07	\$12.86
Total	Average	1.02	\$14.02

TOP 10 OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES

IPE

SOC Category	Top 10 Occupational Categories on IPEs	LQ*	Median Wage
21-1000	Community and Social Services	1.42	\$20.37
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	0.93	\$18.57
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	1.01	\$12.49
31-0000	Healthcare Support	1.09	\$14.70
41-0000	Sales and Related	0.93	\$13.61
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	1.07	\$24.43
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	1.22	\$35.04
25-0000	Education and Training	1.08	\$27.50
35-0000	Food Preparation and Related	0.95	\$10.55
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical	1.43	\$43.79
Total	Average	1.11	\$22.16

Placement

SOC Category	Top 10 Occupational Categories for Initial Placement	LQ*	Median Wage
41-0000	Sales and Related	.93	\$13.61
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	.93	\$18.57
35-0000	Food Preparation and Related	.95	\$10.55
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	.72	\$15.61
31-0000	Healthcare Support	1.09	\$14.70
37-0000	Building, Grounds Cleaning, & Maintenance	.99	\$14.87
21-0000	Community and Social Services	1.42	\$20.37
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	1.01	\$12.49
51-0000	Production and Manufacturing	.73	\$17.18
25-0000	Education and Training	1.08	\$27.50
Total	Average	.99	\$16.55

Successful Employment

SOC Category	Top 10 Occupational Categories for Successful Employment Outcomes	LQ*	Median Wage
41-0000	Sales and Related	.93	\$13.61
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support	.93	\$18.57
35-0000	Food Preparation and Related	.95	\$10.55
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving	.72	\$15.61
21-0000	Community and Social Services	1.42	\$20.37
31-0000	Healthcare Support	1.09	\$14.70
37-0000	Building, Grounds Cleaning, & Maintenance	.99	\$14.87
39-0000	Personal Care and Service	1.01	\$12.49
51-0000	Production and Manufacturing	.73	\$17.18
25-0000	Education and Training	1.08	\$27.50
Total	Average	.99	\$16.55

*LQ= location quotient, measures extra demand in an area for a particular job category. 1= normal demand, 2= twice as much demand as other places, etc. Baseline is for Massachusetts compared to national average.

Source: MA EOLWD and US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Analysis of Potential Retirements for Employees Eligible at 70% or Greater, 2012 VR Funded Employees

Timeframe	# of Employees Eligible for Retirement at 70% or Greater	% of Employees Eligible for Retirement at 70% or Greater
2013	57	13.0%
2015	85	19.4%
2017	118	26.9%
2019	141	32.2%
Total	438	100.0%

Analysis of Potential Retirements for VR-Funded Employees Eligible for Retirement at Any Percentage Level (2012 Employees)

Eligible to Retire, Any Percentage		
Timeframe	Frequency	Percent
2013	225	51.4%
2015	252	57.5%
2017	276	63.0%
2019	298	68.0%

Projected Retirements VR 2012-2019, assuming 70% eligibility level

	Frequency	Percent
Not Retired	297	67.8%
Total Projected Retirements 2012-2019, 70% benefit	141	32.2%
Retired in 2012	42	9.6%
Retired in 2013	15	3.4%
Retired in 2015	28	6.4%
Retired in 2017	33	7.5%
Retired in 2019	23	5.3%
Total	438	100.0%



Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission Strategic Plan SFY 2013-2015

Strategic Plan Progress Report: SFY 2015

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) Strategic Plan for SFY 2013 to 2015 utilizes five high level Goal Areas. Each of the Goal Areas (Goal Areas I through V) is comprised of measurable Target Goals relating to each SFY period. This report provides information on the annual MRC Target Goal outcomes for SFY 2014. (Where appropriate, performance measures relate to federal fiscal year results.)

For more information on the MRC Strategic plan, including descriptions of Goal Areas and strategies for achieving strategic goals, refer to the MRC SFY 2013 to 2015 Strategic Plan document, available at:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/researcher/specific-populations/people-with-disabilities/the-mrc-year-in-review.html>

For further assistance, please contact the MRC Research, Development, and Performance Management Department at **617-204-3766**.

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission Strategic Plan SFY 2013-2015

Goal Area	Goal Area I: Employment and Economic Self Sufficiency/MRC Vocational Rehabilitation
Goal Area Target Goal	Target Goal (I)1.2: By 6/30/15, MRC will successfully place 3,498 individuals with significant disabilities into competitive employment for 90 days or greater.
Target Goal Measurement	The total number of successful employment outcomes obtained by MRC consumers (individuals with significant disabilities placed into competitive employment for 90 days or greater).
Target Goal Status	Target Goal (I)1.2 was achieved The MRC exceeded Target Goal (I) 1.2 by a wide margin, placing 3,653 consumers of vocational rehabilitation services into competitive employment opportunities in SFY 2015.
Target Goal Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MRC implemented the 2nd Annual MRC/OFCCP Federal Contractor Hiring Event, achieving 109 hires from 263 interviews • The web based MRCIS system continued to be improved and enhanced • The Good News Garage donated vehicle program assisted 53 MRC VR consumers • The pilot Worcester Summer Youth Intern pilot program provided 16 participating youth with paid internships • The Competitive Integrated Employment Services (CIES) program expanded its pool of active providers to serve more consumers • Over 80% of consumers placed in the CIES program achieved successful employment outcomes. • MRC established an industry based Pharmacy Technician Training program in collaboration with CVS Caremark and achieved the 1st graduating class and hires • MRC established an online industry based skills assessment and training initiative • The MRC achieved a high 80% satisfaction rate in the annual consumer satisfaction survey
Comments & Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to utilize VR Youth Summer Internship programs for youth consumers • Continue to utilize VR graduate student internship program for staff development • Continue to utilize On the Job Trainings and other similar programs to increase employment

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission Strategic Plan SFY 2013-2015

Goal Area	Goal Area I: Employment and Economic Self Sufficiency/MRC Vocational Rehabilitation
Goal Area Target Goal	<p>Target Goal (I)2.2:</p> <p>By 6/30/15, a total of 85% of MRC local area offices will meet or exceed their annual goals for successful employment outcomes.</p>
Target Goal Measurement	Total number of MRC area offices achieving target divided by total number of area offices (# of offices achieving target ÷ by 25 MRC area offices)
Target Goal Status	<p>Target Goal (I)2.2 was achieved</p> <p>The MRC exceeded the target goal by 11%, as 96% of all MRC area offices reached their employment outcome goals in SFY 2015.</p>
Target Goal Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96% of MRC VR area offices met their goals for employment outcomes (all but one area office). • MRC Achieved higher wages for people with disabilities • The MRC JPS/ESS programs continued to improve outcomes, achieving 875 successful employment outcomes in SFY 2015 • The MRC OJT program achieved a 19% increase in utilization, a 41% increase in placements and a 31% increase in SEOs • The Competitive Integrated Employment Services (CIES) program achieved 766 successful employment outcomes in SFY 2015
Comments & Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust vendor contracts based on performance to maximize employment outcomes • Continue staff training programs • Improve performance on Federal standards and indicators • Continue to enhance the MRCIS web based management system to evaluate non CIES vendor performance, such as educational institutions and other training programs • Continue to implement workforce planning strategies, such as the VR paid intern program • Continue developing MRC job placement capabilities and services in the VR division

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission Strategic Plan SFY 2013-2015

Goal Area	Goal Area II: Community First/MRC Community Living
Goal Area Target Goal	Target Goal (II)1.2: By 6/30/15, 11,475 consumers will receive the services necessary to live in the community.
Target Goal Measurement	Calculated from the number of MRC consumers, including waiver participants, who transitioned into the community and the number of CL program consumers who received services/supports to remain in the community.
Target Goal Status	Target Goal (II)1.2 was achieved MRC exceeded this target goal by 223 individuals, with 11,698 CL consumers receiving MRC CL services through 6/30/15.
Target Goal Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAP programs provided functional skills training to youth with disabilities. • MRC ABI waiver program successfully met its program goals for EHS Results • The MRC MFP waiver program was successfully deployed • CL Home Care services maximized resources to assist individuals with disabilities to remain at home and out of institutions. • MRC successfully obtained a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant for improving systems of care for elders with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) • The MRC launched the REquipment Assistive Technology (AT) reuse program to assist individuals with disabilities in receiving no/low cost medical equipment
Comments & Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue developing two new ABI nonresidential and MFP waivers to support individuals transitioning from long term care facilities into the community • Collaborate with the EOHHS in submitting for 811 funding to increase affordable/accessibile housing • Continue to utilize available resources to maximize community living opportunities for people with disabilities utilizing a Community First strategy

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Goal Area	Goal Area III: Effective Government/MRC Disability Determination Services
Goal Area Target Goal	<p style="text-align: center;">Target Goal (III)1.2:</p> <p>By 9/30/2015 (the federal fiscal year), MRC will produce the budgeted workload targets for initial and CDR claims as well as the overall budgeted workload.</p>
Target Goal Measurement	Number of actual cases processed divided by the number of projected cases to be processed.
Target Goal Status	<p style="text-align: center;">Target Goal (III)1.2 was achieved</p> <p>In FY 2014, DDS met target (III)1.2 by exceeding the targets for a budgeted workload for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initial claims (target = 49,020, actual = 52,993); • CDRs (target = 9,075, actual = 9,150); and • total claims (target = 85,020, actual = 86,190)
Target Goal Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In FY 2015, DDS achieved a budgeted workload for initial claims and CDR claims as well as an overall budgeted workload, exceeding targets for initial claims, CDRs and total claims • The DDS division produced 56,716 initial claims, 9,150 continuing review claims, and an overall workload of 86,190
Comments & Next Steps	<p>The MRC DDS division will continue to monitor key performance indicators.</p> <p>Note: DDS statistics are compiled and analyzed based on a federal fiscal year</p>

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Goal Area	Goal Area III: Effective Government/MRC Disability Determination Services
Goal Area Target Goal	Target Goal (III)2.2: By 6/30/15, exceed SSA performance accuracy goal for accuracy of decisions of 90.6%.
Target Goal Measurement	Number of cases returned by review components divided by number of cases reviewed.
Target Goal Status	Target Goal (III)2.2 was achieved MRC DDS exceeded the target goal by achieving an accuracy of decisions rate of 96.7% in FY 2014.
Target Goal Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In FY 2014, DDS achieved a budgeted workload for initial claims and CDR claims as well as an overall budgeted workload, exceeding targets for initial claims, CDRs and total claims • The DDS division produced 56,716 initial claims, 9,150 continuing review claims, and an overall workload of 86,190
Comments & Next Steps	<p>The MRC DDS division will continue to monitor data relating to accuracy of decisions.</p> <p>Note: DDS statistics are compiled and analyzed based on a federal fiscal year</p>

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Goal Area	Goal Area IV: Effective Government/MRC Administration & Finance Office for Financial Management & Budget (OFMB)
Goal Area Target Goal	Target Goal (IV)1.2: By 6/30/15, MRC will develop a paperless process for fiscal business processes.
Target Goal Measurement	Completion of paperless system deliverable by the target date.
Target Goal Status	Target Goal (IV)1.2 was achieved The MRC developed paperless financial processes
Target Goal Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A framework for paperless processes was developed by the MRC fiscal department and a feature to automate staff travel reimbursements is underway. • A paperless contracts database system has undergone planning and initial testing phases • Project management on internal controls were successfully completed • Internal Control Plan was developed, implemented and distributed to staff on time • A Risk Analysis was successfully completed for the MRC agency
Comments & Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect MRCIS to MMARS activity codes to further automate financial processes • Continue to work on a paperless system for staff travel reimbursement, and • Continue working to reduce MMARS transactions

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Goal Area	Goal Area V: MRC/Cluster Strategic Plan Initiatives
Goal Area Target Goal	<p style="text-align: center;">Target Goal (V)1.1:</p> <p>By 6/30/15, MRC will Serve 100 individuals with TBI who are in their homes or other community settings, including 24/7 residential services.</p>
Target Goal Measurement	Calculated from the number of MRC consumers, including waiver participants, who transitioned into the community and the number of TBI program consumers who received services/supports to remain in the community.
Target Goal Status	<p style="text-align: center;">Target Goal (V)1.1 was achieved</p> <p>The MRC achieved target goal (V)1.1 by serving 100 individuals with Traumatic Brain Injuries in SFY 2015.</p>
Target Goal Milestones	The MRC was successful in keeping all available TBI program slots utilized in SFY 2015.
Comments & Next Steps	Continue to maximize the utilization of available program services assisting individuals with TBI to live in their communities throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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Goal Area	Goal Area V: MRC/Cluster Strategic Plan Initiatives
Goal Area Target Goal	Target Goal (V)1.2: Implement the Federal Hiring Initiative with the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program (OFCCP)
Target Goal Measurement	Achieve a goal of 30% for the number of participating MRC consumers hired as a result of the Federal Hiring Initiative through 6/30/14.
Target Goal Status	Target Goal (V)1.2 was achieved The target goal was exceeded by the MRC. The ratio of consumer hires to interviews was 41% (109 hires out of 263 interviews)
Target Goal Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 50 contractors and 263 MRC consumers took part in 3 state wide events. 101 MRC consumers were placed into employment and 79 achieved successful employment outcomes, maintaining their employment for 90 days or more (as of 9/30/2015). The average wage is \$13.81 per hour The average work hours are 29 hours per week.
Comments & Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify event and schedule an accessible space. Recruit employers Identify employment openings and skills required. Identify consumers and their skills and match them available openings. Capitalize on new Federal regulations requiring a 7% hiring target for individuals with disabilities at Federal contractors. Evaluate lessons learned of 2014 event and continue to expand and enhance the event for 2015 in multiple locations.

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Goal Area	Goal Area V: MRC/Cluster Strategic Plan Initiatives
Goal Area Target Goal	Target Goal (V)1.3: MRC Summer Youth Leadership Initiative: achieve an 100% completion rate for Youth Leadership Forum delegates
Target Goal Measurement	The number of participating Summer Youth Forum delegates divided by the number of delegates that successfully receive a completion certificate.
Target Goal Status	Target Goal (V)1.3 was achieved MRC achieved the target goal, with 100% of the Youth Leadership Forum Delegates (36) successfully achieving a completion certificate
Target Goal Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the 2015 Youth Leadership Forum there were approximately 80 applicants (10 peer leaders, 36 delegates, and 14 staff captains) participating in a successful three day event at Bridgewater State University. All delegates successfully completed the program and received certificates.
Comments & Next Steps	Continue to develop the Summer Youth Leadership Forum as a means of fostering leadership skills and employment for youth with disabilities.

MRC Performance Goals and Metrics

AGENCY	METRIC	FY2017 TARGET
MRC (VR Division)	% annual growth in the number of high school students with disabilities served by MRC's Vocational Rehabilitation Program. (1,567)	10% annual increase in the number of high school students with disabilities receiving VR services, including pre-employment transition services.
MRC (CL Division)	# and % of individuals with disabilities transitioning from skilled nursing homes and facility-based care to the community and receiving ongoing support services in the community.	1,074 individuals with disabilities transitioned from skilled nursing homes and facility-based care to the community, and 10% annual growth in consumers transitioned and supported in the community.
MRC (DDS Division)	% of SSA disability claims for Massachusetts citizens processed at or less than the 90 days SSA national public service indicator goal.	85% of disability claim for Massachusetts citizens processed at or less than the 90 day SSA national public service indicator goal.

MRC Research, Development and Performance Management Department
SRC Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Committee

MRC 2015 VR Needs Assessment Focus Group Summary:
Methodology, Implementation and Findings

Summary

In 2015, MRC held its third annual VR Needs Assessment Focus Group at the Annual Consumer Conference in collaboration with the SRC Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Committee. Once again, MRC and the Needs Assessment Committee worked together to develop the logistical plan for the focus group and to review and revise the guiding questions to be used in the session. The detailed logistical plan outlined the focus group guiding questions, the format and structure of the session, materials to be distributed, the exhibition table, recruitment, and accommodations for consumers such as CART reporting, ASL interpreters, and other important logistics.

The focus group was held at the 2015 Annual Consumer Conference on June 18, 2015 at the Four Points Sheraton Hotel in Norwood, MA. Once again, the focus group was intended to complement the annual vocational rehabilitation needs assessment survey by providing an additional source for gathering consumer opinions on their needs as well as to make use of the opportunity to engage with a large number of MRC consumers. The focus group was conducted by staff of the MRC Research, Development, and Performance Management Department (R&D).

Compared to the past two years, in 2015 the Focus Group was officially on the agenda and program for the Consumer Conference as a choice-optional workshop which assisted with recruitment as it allowed attendees to pre-register for the focus group as one of their breakout workshop selections. Over 50 consumers pre-registered for the focus group but as expected, there was some attrition due to registration changes or consumers choosing to attend one of the several other conference sessions occurring concurrently with the focus group. While the past three years have confirmed that the focus group can be executed in varying circumstances using basic preparation and strategies, this year's results demonstrate that inclusion of the focus group on the formal agenda with pre-registration with the conference registration is the preferable strategy.

Overall, the focus group was a success in obtaining valuable feedback from MRC consumers. Results will be incorporated into the 2015 Needs Assessment Report. The themes from the feedback obtained through the focus group once again mirrored many of those arising in the 2014 Needs Assessment as well as other reports.

Focus Group Methodology and Recruitment

The focus group was an official choice-optional workshop on the agenda and program at the Consumer Conference on June 18, 2015. The focus group was conducted from 2:45pm to 4:30pm on the day of the conference in a breakout room and. Given the conference also involves consumers from MRC as well as the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), and the Massachusetts Commission of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH), the program and agenda included language indicating that the focus group was intended for MRC consumers only.

Recruitment for the focus group was conducted in several different methods. Consumers were invited to participate in the focus group through an electronic announcement sent to all MRC consumers prior to the

conference by MRC Consumer Involvement staff. MRC VR counseling staff were also notified of the focus group so they could inform their consumers. Consumers were able to pre-register for the focus group as part of their registration for the conference as one of their choices for the afternoon breakout session period.

The R&D team also staffed a centrally located dedicated exhibitor's table with the goal of engaging consumers, to discuss and answer questions on the focus group, and distribute information on MRC facts and services, including the findings of the 2014 Needs Assessment. As with previous years, questions were made available ahead of time at the exhibitor table and were passed out at the start of the focus group to give consumers an idea of what would be discussed. Questions were based on those contained in the Needs Assessment Survey but have been broadened and simplified to account for the focus group format. A list of common acronyms plus a 1 page summary of key findings from the 2014 Needs Assessment was also distributed to focus group participants.

The room was setup in an auditorium style setup including a projection screen, easel with flip chart paper and magic markers, and wireless microphones. A brief PowerPoint presentation outlining the intent and ground rules of the focus group as well as a review of actions taken from the previous year's Needs Assessment Report was reviewed at the start of the focus group.

The focus group started on time at 2:45pm with an introduction by Joshua Boardman from the MRC Consumer Involvement Department and a brief welcome from Richard Colantonio, Chair of the Needs Assessment Committee. The focus group lasted approximately two hours, and ended at approximately 4:50pm. A total of 35 consumers participated in the focus group. This remained the rough number of participants for the bulk of the focus group, with some people joining the session after it started or leaving prior to its completion. The 35 participants were comprised of a diverse group of individuals in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, and disability. One attendee turned out to be a consumer of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind and not MRC, and their feedback is not included in this report.

To ensure accessibility for all participants, CART reporting was available in the room for attendees and there also were a series of interpreters in the room to assist those who were deaf or hard of hearing. The Chair of the SRC Needs Assessment Committee acted as an observer, Graham Porell from the MRC R&D Department acted as the moderator and Lola Akinlola from R&D took field notes and observations. Several Individual Consumer Consultant/PCAs also assisted with collecting evaluations, distributing materials, and passing around microphones.

Feedback and Themes Resulting from Focus Group Discussion

The overall discussion during the course of the focus group was in-depth and covered many topics related to MRC's mission and programs as well as overall issues facing individuals with disabilities. The moderator guided the focus group discussion based upon the themes and questions in the questionnaire handed out at the beginning of the focus group. A number of the themes and topics raised in the focus group were consistent with many of those raised in the 2014 Needs Assessment, such as many consumers feel the services and supports provided by MRC and its staff are very effective and useful, that some consumers would like to see improved communication between MRC counselors and consumers, that consumers may have different experiences with MRC services by area office, that some consumers may not be aware or need more information on service options provided by MRC, among others. Participants also voiced their appreciation to MRC for conducting the focus group to provide them with a forum to provide input, discuss their experiences, and provide suggestions to the agency.

- Consumers provided both positive and constructive feedback about their experiences with MRC, the services they received, and their involvement in the development of their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). One consumer expressed gratitude to MRC for providing effective services which recently led her to becoming employed with the assistance of a team of MRC counseling and placement staff. MRC assisted her with learning job skills, mock interviews, and with completing job applications. Another consumer discussed how MRC helped her to build upon skills she obtained in previous jobs to obtain employment in a public school. Consumers also provided constructive comments and feedback about their experiences with MRC and with particular services, including communication with MRC and its staff. Some specific remarks from consumers included:
 - “MRC was instrumental with me being successfully employed and remaining employed”
 - “My counselor is doing a great job, but I am having a hard time finding a job in my home area, goal, and with the hours I want.”
 - “MRC services are great but there needs to be improvement in communication correspondence and gaps between appointments”.
 - “MRC was critical in assisting me in facing the outside world and to develop the keys to obtaining a job after my accident.”
- As with last year, differences in experiences and services across different MRC VR offices was reported by some consumers. Some consumers indicated that they received different messages on service availability and service guidelines from different offices. There were a number of questions and comments about MRC policies, guidelines, and processes. These questions suggest that refresher trainings or webinars/E-learning on MRC policies and procedures to MRC counselors and other VR staff may be beneficial to ensure that adequate and consistent information is being provided to MRC consumers on services, policies, and procedures.
- Some consumers may not be aware of all the services and resources provided by MRC and/or may require additional information on service options, including those offered by the Community Living Division. This is consistent with findings from the 2014 Needs Assessment report that not all MRC consumers are aware of the service options available to them. Particular services consumers were not aware of included Assistive Technology and many services provided by the Community Living Division. Areas where consumers needed more information on included GED/HSIT preparation, assistance with completing online applications and Federal Job applications, soft-skills training, and post-employment services. It was recommended that MRC ensure that its VR counselors are fully aware of the full range of MRC services and that additional information on available services be provided to consumers.
- Communication was a theme that was discussed in detail during the focus group. Some consumers voiced a need for improved communication between consumers and MRC counselors. This is consistent with findings from the 2014 Needs Assessment. Specific examples given by consumers included difficulty contacting their local MRC VR office, scheduling appointments, and contacting and/or staying in touch with their counselor. It was also noted that communication may vary by specific office and counselor. Improved communication and more follow-ups between counselors and consumers was recommended by focus group participants. A participant also reported that MRC counselors seem to be dealing with a large volume of work and that this may be impacting communication with consumers. It was suggested that additional staff resources and increased use of technology and electronic methods of communication may assist in improving communication between counselors and consumers.
- Several consumers indicated their VR cases recently had been transferred to a new counselor due to staff turnover. It was suggested that MRC increase communication to consumers in situations where their counselor has changed. One consumer recommended that it would be helpful if MRC had a more personal process when cases are transferred to a new counselor. A specific suggestion is that the new counselor should give the

consumer a personal phone call to introduce themselves in addition to sending a letter in the mail announcing the change.

- Participating consumers indicated transportation remains a large issue for many MRC consumers. Consistent with the findings of the 2014 Needs Assessment, Consumers' comments indicate that transportation needs deeply impact some consumers' ability to pursue MRC services, long term employment or the ability to pursue independence.
- Resources from other agencies and organizations in addition to MRC were also discussed during the focus group. It was noted that there are many different agencies and resources from partner agencies that can assist individuals with disabilities in addition to MRC, including DDS, DMH, MCDDH, the Career Centers, community partners, non-profit agencies, and the Independent Living Centers. However, these agencies can have different eligibility criteria as well. The moderator noted that MRC is strengthening its ties to partners such as the Career Centers, the Department of Education, and other agencies as part of the recently enacted Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act (WIOA).
- A number of consumers discussed frustrations and challenges with online job applications. It was noted that MRC counselors, Job Placement, and Employment Specialist staff can assist consumers in filling out applications and can contact the employers regarding online applications. While MRC does not have control over individual employers' online hiring systems, it can make recommendations to our employer partners. Several consumers expressed concern over difficulties for older individuals in obtaining employment. This is an area where consumers can work with their MRC counselor to develop strategies in this area.
- Other recommendations and suggestions from consumers not addressed above include:
 - Counselors should inform consumers about their opportunities to provide input through the Needs Assessment and Consumer Satisfaction Surveys
 - MRC should consider adding Peer Specialists at its Area Offices to work together with MRC consumers as they go through the VR process. The capacity for could be through the Individual Consumer Consultant (ICC) program and the Independent Living Centers for peer support activities.
 - Additional trainings for consumers on computer software and technology.
 - Additional resources for assistive technology.
 - More job fairs and hiring events with employers to assist with job placement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, the 2015 focus group was once again successful in achieving its goals in obtaining consumer input to incorporate as part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment process. The focus group provided the ability to gather rich qualitative data, and the opportunity to speak directly with diverse MRC consumers, and once again demonstrated genuine efforts towards outreach and opinion-gathering efforts on the part of MRC. The information gathered through the focus group clearly complements that collected in the Needs Assessment survey, the Consumer Satisfaction Survey, and other Needs Assessment components. The findings of the focus group will be incorporated into the 2015 Needs Assessment Final Report along with the findings of the 2015 survey which will be conducted in September 2015. The results once again suggest that the focus group can be executed in varying circumstances using basic preparation and strategies, however this year's results demonstrate that inclusion of the focus group on the formal agenda with pre-registration is the preferable strategy. It is recommended that MRC and the VR Needs Assessment Committee continue to hold focus groups for the Needs Assessment Annually at the consumer conference or annually at an area office or other site if the conference is not held during a particular year.



**Creating Opportunities For
Independent Living And Work**

**Counselor Survey on
Pre-Employment Transitional Services (PETS)
October 21st, 2015**

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Introduction:

The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission administered a Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) Survey to MRC VR counselors. The survey was designed for counselors who are actively working with high school students with disabilities. The purpose of the survey was to gather information on if the high schools provide Pre-Employment Transitional Services (i.e. internships, career counseling, and work readiness training) to students, if they provide enough PETS services, and the quality of PETS services the schools provide to students. The survey results are based on the counselors' experience and opinions with the high school(s) they are currently working with. The information that was collected through this survey will assist MRC with WIOA planning efforts. Again, this survey is based on the opinions and experiences counselors have working with high schools and is limited to the schools chosen by responding counselors.

Methodology:

MRC administered the survey using Survey Monkey to all MRC VR counselors who currently are working with high school students. Counselor participation in the survey was completely voluntary. The survey was active for two weeks, allowing all MRC VR counselors the opportunity to partake in the survey. There were a total of 12 questions on the survey on Pre-Employment Transitional Services in high schools. The survey received a total of 103 responses out of 223 possible responses (46%), from MRC VR counselors not including VR counselors who are 960 post-retirement employees. A comprehensive list of 403 high schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was obtained from the Massachusetts Department of Education website¹, using the most up to date list provided by the website. Counselors were asked to identify at the top 3 schools they work with and answer the survey questions based on their opinions of PETS services provided by each of the high schools they had selected. It should be noted that some counselors may be assigned to one high school while other counselors may work with more than one high school, which is reflected in some of the data results. Furthermore, two reminders were sent out via email to MRC VR counselors encouraging their participation in the survey. A majority of the responses were received from the North District (37%), 32% from the South District, and 31% from the West District. Again, the results from this survey based solely on the counselors' experience and opinions of the high schools.

Overview:

Based on the responses, the majority of counselors responded that the high schools they work with provide some form of Pre-employment Services to High School students. Based on the pattern of responses, many counselors appear to be principally working with one high school. Additionally, counselors who are working with more than one high school were generally more knowledgeable of services provided by their first high school choice, which may be attributed to the counselors' familiarity of that high school. We see this pattern

¹ Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

(http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/selectedpopulations.aspx?mode=school&year=2015&Continue.x=6&Continue.y=4)

reflected throughout the survey responses. A total of 181 schools were selected by responding counselors as schools they work with. Noted, some counselors may be assigned to the same schools. Additionally, 61 schools in the North District, 56 in the West District, and 61 in the South District were identified as providing some form of Pre-Employment Transitional Services to high schools students with disabilities (see appendix for list of schools). Furthermore, the counselors had identified in their comments that some schools may provide different services to students depending on their needs and may not have access to all Pre-Employment Transitional Services available in the high schools. Further research may be needed to obtain further information on the types of services that are being offered to high schools students with disabilities.

MRC District Analysis:

From a MRC district aspect, counselors had identified the high schools they work with as providing some forms of PETS services to high school students.

North District:

- Overall, 44% responding counselors in the North District identified high schools as providing job exploration counseling services such as career interest and or aptitude testing;
- 34% of responding counselors in the North District identified high schools as providing work based learning experiences;
- 42% of responses received from the North suggested that the high schools they work with provide some form of counseling towards post-secondary programs;
- 21% of responses from the North District identified that high schools provide work-readiness training services to high school students;
- 14% of responding counselors identified high schools they work with as providing self-advocacy services to high schools students in the North District.

Below are some of the general comments received from the North regarding Job exploration services that are provided to high school students:

- ***WHS does have a vocational coordinator who works with getting students some temporary employment.***
- ***At Billerica Memorial High School in the Life Skills II program (students who will stay in the program until they are 22) the students work on the above skills.***

South District:

- 38% responding counselors in the South District identified high schools as providing job exploration counseling services to high school students with disabilities
- 23% of counselors in the South identified high schools as providing work based learning experiences to high school students with disabilities;
- 42% of responses received from the South District suggested high schools did provide some form of counseling towards post-secondary programs such as financial aid planning and assistance with school applications to students;
- 17% of responding counselors responses suggested that high schools provide work-readiness training services to high school students;
- 14% of counselors identified high schools they work with as providing self-advocacy services to high schools students.

Below are some of the general comments received from the South regarding Job exploration services that are provided to high school students:

- *McKinley has a partnership with PYD however only a select number of students are exposed to resume development skills, etc. McKinley has a yearly Career Fair that MRC participates in.*
- *Some students are referred to North River Collaborative for vocational exploration as part of their IEP.*
- *Dedham High School also provides an after school job club, and an annual career fair.*

West District:

- 34% responding counselors in the West District identified high schools as providing job exploration counseling services career interest and or aptitude testing;
- 25% of counselors in the West identified high schools as providing work based learning experiences to high school students with disabilities;
- 33% of responses received from the West District suggested high schools did provide some form of counseling towards post-secondary programs such as financial aid planning and assistance with school applications to students;
- 13% of responding counselors from the West District suggested that high schools provide work-readiness training services to high school students;
- 8% of counselors identified high schools they work with as providing self-advocacy services to high schools students

Below are some of the general comments received from the West regarding Job exploration services that are provided to high school students:

- *All the schools have some form of volunteer work or community experience for the students. Some of the schools have some job seeking skills and/or some soft skills training.*
- *I don't feel that enough attention to job exploration is being done. I feel strongly that this should be part of their school curriculum during their sophomore year in getting deaf students better prepared for the work world.*

Amount of Pre-Employment Transitional Services (PETS) provided to students:

Additionally, in the survey counselors in each district were asked “In your opinion, do the high schools provide enough Pre-Employment Transitional Services (PETS) to students?”:

- In the North District, 53% of counselors felt that schools do not provide enough PETS services while, 14% believe that schools do provide enough PETS services, while the remaining 31% were unsure. Some of the general comments were :
 - *More would be helpful, including work experiences (including for students who do well with academics with/without supports (and focusing on going to college) but have difficulty getting and keeping a job without supports)*
 - *MRC and the local high schools collaborate well to offer services. An ongoing problem is making sure all students are given the opportunity and access to services, as well as what services can be provided to students that are not going onto school and not ready to work after graduation.*
- In the West District, 36% of counselors felt there are not enough PETS services provided by schools to high school students, a total of 16% of counselors believed that the high schools provided a significant amount of PETS services, and 32% were unsure. Some of the general comments were :
 - *The schools do their best to provide some of this for the students. Some schools are far better than others. There are so many students that they serve, many are not getting their needs met as far as pre-employment services go.*

- ***I believe the schools provide what they are able to for the students who are in most need of assistance. All students under IEP's do not receive PETS.***
- In the South District, 48% of counselors opinions reflected that the high schools they work with do not provide enough PETS services while, 16% believe they do provide enough PETS services, while 14% were unsure.
 - ***"Arlington uses WOE and provides "some" students work experiences. They are not realistic but they are work experiences. Watertown places all the students who are placable in real jobs in the community. The less skilled kids, get to wipe down tables in the cafe. CRLS has a dedicated team and classes, but because of the population, many of the kids don't get everything and all the support they need".***
 - ***Malden High offers "the largest array of services for PETS experiences that prepare Transition students for the reality of the job market", based on their knowledge of the school."***
 - ***"For some of the Special Ed students but not for all of them. It seems to depend on the level they are placed in and their teacher or advocacy of parents in IEP meetings."***
 - ***Students are provided some, but little PETS services. It is left up to individual to largely seek services on their own during, or after high school.***

Quality of Pre-Employment Transitional Services (PETS) provided to students:

Additionally, counselors were asked **"In your opinion, do the high schools provide quality Pre-Employment Transitional Services (PETS) to students?"**:

- In the North District, 33% of counselors indicated that they believe that schools do not provide quality PETS services, while 22% believe they do provide quality PETS services, and the remaining 44% of counselors were unsure. Counselors included some of the following statements below:
 - ***Malden High offers the largest array of services for PETS experiences that prepare Transition students for the reality of the job market.***
 - ***Additional services support would help to better prepare for employment, including gaining practical work experience while in high school.***
- In the West District, 33% of counselors felt that quality PETS services are not provided to high school students, while 14% of counselors believed that the high schools provided a quality PETS services, and 44% were unsure.
 - ***It all depends on the capacity that the schools have to provide these opportunities. I believe students have to assert themselves to their guidance counselor. For some schools, it is work based training, so depending on which track the student is enrolled in, will depend on whether there is an internship opportunity or not. The alternative schools, I am not sure.***
- In the South District, 31% of responding counselors indicated that the high schools do not provide quality PETS services while, 20% believe quality services are provided, and the remaining 24% of counselors were unsure.
 - ***"As an example, some schools have a huge population of students with disabilities that ensuring quality/appropriate transition services for all of these students seems to be very difficult with a number of students "falling through the cracks."***

Overview of Pre-Employment Transitional Services (PETS) provided by schools:

We continued to see the same pattern of counselors being more knowledgeable of the services being provided in School choice #1 in comparison to School choice #2 and School choice #3.

- On average, 86 % of respondents were aware of job exploration services provided by School #1 compared to School #2 (55%), and to School #3 (36%). Again, it was expected that more counselors would be more aware of services provided by School #1, which may be attributed to the counselors' familiarity of the services provided by the school. This same pattern was evident throughout the survey.
- 88% of respondents were aware of post-secondary school search tools provided by School #1 compared to School #2 (65%), and to School #3 (40%).
- When asked about work based learning experiences provided to high school students, 88% of respondents were aware that School #1 provided these services, compared to School #2 (65%) and School #3 (40%).
- Overall, 80% of respondents identified that School #1 provided work readiness training to high school students, compared to School #2 (62%) and School #3 (27%).
- 82% of respondents identified that School #1 provided self – advocacy to students, while only 45% identified these services as available in School #2 (45%) and School #3 (22%).

Open-ended comments from Counselors suggest that schools do have PETS services available for students but may be delivered differently across schools and/or districts.

- ***“Each school does offer all of these services, but to me, they do not appear to be uniformly offered to ALL students.”***
- ***“Each school provides work experience differently. MCAS students who do not pass, will be offered experiences to help gain back credits that may have been lost due to absences or whatever. Other schools only offer internships to students who are earning passing grades.”***

Specific Pre-Employment Transitional Services (PETS) provided by schools:

Counselors were asked, based on their opinion, **if any of the top 3 high schools they selected provided job exploration services to students with disabilities:**

- The majority of counselors (89%) for School #1 identified that the school provided career interest and aptitude testing to their students, compared to School #2 and School #3, where 62% and 34% of counselors respectively responded that the school provides these services to high school students.
- 82% of respondents identified School #1 as providing counseling on specific occupational skills for careers compared to School #2 (52%) and School #3 (39%).
- Additionally, 85% percent of respondents identified that School #1 provided job seeking skills including resume development compared to School #2 (51%) and School #3 (34%).

Counselors were asked, based on their opinion, **if any of top 3 high schools they selected provide work based learning experiences to students with disabilities.** Survey response data indicate the following types of PETS services are provided to students:

- The majority of counselors (83%) for School #1 identified that the school provided in-school work experience to their students, compared to School #2 and School #3, where 54% and 23% of counselors respectively responded that the school provides these services to high school students.
- 88% of counselors agreed that School #1 provided volunteer opportunities to students compared to School #2 (59%), and School #3 (26%). Volunteer opportunities seemed to be the most common form of work based learning experiences offered amongst all 3 high schools
- 79% of counselors believe that School #1 provided paid/unpaid internships to high school students in comparison to School #2 (62%) and School #3 (23%).

- The majority of counselors (79%), indicated that School #1 provided job shadowing opportunities to students as a form of work based learning experience, compared to School #2 (36%) and School #3 (27%).
- Approximately 47% of counselors were aware that apprenticeship services were being provided as a form of work based learning experience by both School #1 and School #2, in comparison to the 27% of counselors aware that School #3 provided this service to students.
- In addition, 76% of counselors identified School #1 as providing job coaching services to students, compared to School #2 (38%) and School #3 (35%).

Counselors were asked to **“select the following counseling services towards post-secondary programs that are provided to high school students”.**

- In School #1, 94% of responding counselors were aware that the schools provided post-secondary school search services to students. Additionally, 80% of counselors in School #2 and 48% of counselors in School #3 identified that these schools delivered these types of services to high school students with disabilities.
- 95% of counselors identified School #1 as providing financial aid planning to students, compared to 71% in School #2, and 36% in School #3. Overall, this service seemed to be the most prevalent counseling service provided to high school students from the high schools.
- The majority of counselors in School #1 (93%), identified assistance with school applications as a form of counseling services available to students. Additionally, 69% counselors in School #2 and 40% of counselors in School #3 indicated that these schools provided this service as well.
- Approximately 93% of responding counselors believe that School #1 provides students with referrals to student support services. Furthermore, 62% of counselors believe that these services are obtainable by students in School #2, compared to only 34% in School #3.
- Based on counselor responses, information on post-secondary educational options are available to students in School #1 (87%), School #2 (66%), and School #3 (43%).
- Approximately 68% of counselors indicated job coaching services are provided to students at School #1. Also, counselors also responded that School #2 (42% of respondents), and School #3 (32% of respondents) also provided these services to students.

Noted, there were higher levels of awareness from VR counselors regarding counseling services towards post-secondary programs provided by schools. This may be due to counselors’ knowledge that a majority of high schools provide these types of services to high school students who are planning to attend a college or university to continue education after graduation.

Additionally, some counselor comments indicate that some schools may not be communicating the availability of certain PETS services to parents, and it is recommended that more complete and accurate information be provided to parents:

- ***“Some of the services are provided to ALL students in the schools via workshops or parent nights, not necessarily on a one to one basis. Information sometimes seems to be sporadically given in regard to post-secondary high school options and often comes from an individual conscientious teacher rather than as a part of a program.”***
- ***“All these schools provide college nights to parents but financial planning is limited to telling people to apply for FAFSA. Transition students who do not pass MCAS and get a diploma are not eligible for FAFSA. Parents often seem uninformed that the world of adult services requires them to be financially eligible for some services. Many parents do not understand that if their child does not pass MCAS they will not be able to attend college. More information needs to be provided to parents about the options for post-secondary for***

students who do not pass MCAS and more focus needs to be directed to the local job markets and preparing students for employment through things like PETS to give "real work world" experience to young people."

Counselors were asked to **"select any of the following workplace readiness training(s) that are provided to high school students with disabilities"**

- 82% of responses for School #1 and School #2 indicate that the schools provided information on disclosure as a form of work readiness training. The response for School #3 regarding the availability of these services was fairly low again with a response level of 27%. This is likely due to the fact that most counselors do not work as closely with the last school compared with to the first two schools and therefore may be unaware of the services in the school.
- 85% of counselors are aware that School #1 provides soft skills training to students, compared to School #2 (46%) and School #3 (25%).
- Many counselors indicated that transportation options and travel training services are available in both School #1 (77%) and School #2 (68%), while much fewer indicated they were aware of such services in School #3 (23%). Overall counselors identified that some transportation services are provided to students in these schools.
- 75% of counselors were aware that School #1 provided interview preparation/ practice and role-playing to students, while 57% of counselors in School #2, and 36% of counselors in School #3 were aware of these services being available to students.

Counselors were asked to **"select any of the following self-advocacy training(s) that are provided to high school students with disabilities in these particular schools"**.

- Regarding instruction in self-advocacy, 76% of responding counselors believed that this service was available to students with disabilities in School #1, compared to School #2 (64%), and School #3 (32%).
- 81% of counselors were aware that schools provided peer-mentoring services to students in School #1, compared to School #2 (31%) and School #3 (19%).
- Awareness of Leadership Training services for students was particularly high in School #1 among counselors (91%), compared to School #2 (36%) and School #3 (18%).
- 80% of counselors were aware of referral services to independent living centers being offered in School #1 compared to 50% for School #2, and 20% in School #3.

We continued to see the same pattern of counselors being more knowledgeable of the services being provided in School choice #1 in comparison to School choice #2 and School choice #3. Again, the survey findings are completely based on the counselor's opinion of PETS services provided to high school students with disabilities.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, most counselors identified that the schools they work with do generally provide some type of PETS services to students with disabilities. Based on the pattern of the data, counselors are generally more knowledgeable about services offered at the first (or the primary) school they work more with compared to the second and third schools, which is reflected in the response data. In their best judgement, counselors identified the schools as providing either enough and quality PETS services to high schools students. These, responses are based on the counselor's general knowledge and experience with the schools:

- **North District**- Oakmont Regional High School, Newton North High School, Greater Lowell Technical High School, Malden High School, Northeast Metro Tech, Peabody Veterans Memorial High School, Community High School Alternative HS, Learning Academy, and Amesbury High School
- **West District**- Amherst Regional High School, South East Campus Amherst Regional HS, Franklin County Technical School, Berkshire Arts & Technology Charter Public School, Lenox Memorial High School, Agawam High School, Westfield High School, North High School, and Holyoke Catholic High School.
- **South District**- Monument Mountain Regional High School, Mount Everett Regional School. Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School, Whitman-Hanson Regional High School, Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School, Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School, Canton High School, New Mission High School, Taunton High School, and Norton High School

Additionally, counselors identified the following schools as needing improvement in both the amount and quality of PETS services delivered to high schools students. Again, these responses are based on the counselor's general knowledge and experience with the schools:

- **North District** - Lexington High School, Winchester High School, Newton South High School, Newton Central High School, Watertown High School, Everett High School, Natick High School, Framingham High School, Ashland High School, Fitchburg High School, Leominster Center for Technical Education Leominster High School, Clinton High School, Tyngsborough High School, Haverhill High School, Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School, Wachusett Regional High School Quabbin Regional High School, Murdock Middle/High School, Medford High School
- **West District**- Blackstone-Millville Regional High School, Grafton High School, Millbury Junior/Senior High School, Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, Uxbridge High School, Nipmuc Regional High School, Wahconah Regional High School, Pittsfield High School, Springfield High School of Science and Technology, Springfield Central High School, Franklin High School, Millis High School, Northbridge High School, Willie Ross School for the Deaf, South High Community School, Doherty Memorial High School, Oxford High School, and Shepherd Hill Regional High School.
- **South District** - Holbrook Junior Senior High School, South Shore Vocational Technical High School, Avon Middle High School, Rockland Senior High School, Apponequet Regional High School, Somerset Berkley Regional High School, Stoughton High School, Sharon High School, Brockton High School, Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School, Cape Cod Regional Technical High School, Sturgis Charter Public School, East Bridgewater High School, Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School, West Bridgewater Middle-Senior High School, TechBoston Academy, Middleborough High School, Duxbury High School, Hanover High School, Plymouth South High School, Gifford School, Goddard Alternative School, Brockton High School, BB Russell Alternative School, Attleboro High School, Dighton-Rehoboth Regional High School, McKinley Preparatory High School.

Additionally, counselors identified schools need improvement on effectively communicating to parents and students the types of services that are actively available to the student. Additionally, future research could include school data provided by the Massachusetts Department of Education website for additionally information on PETS services or best practices available to high school students with disabilities.

Appendix

List of schools counselors currently work with:

REF #	North Region High Schools	West Region High Schools	South Region High Schools
1	Acton-Boxborough Regional High School	Agawam High School	Attleboro High School
2	Amesbury High School	Amherst Regional High School	Avon Middle High School
3	Andover High School	Athol High School	Barnstable High School
4	Arlington High School	Bartlett High School	Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School
5	Ashland High School	Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School	BB Russell Alternative School
6	Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School	Bellingham High School	Bellingham High School
7	Belmont High School	Berkshire Arts & Technology Charter Public School	Berkshire Arts & Technology Charter Public School
8	Beverly High School	Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School	Boston Arts Academy
9	Billerica Memorial High School	Blackstone-Millville Regional High School	Braintree High School
10	Cambridge Rindge and Latin School	Chicopee Comprehensive High School	Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School
11	Clinton High School	David Prouty High School	Brighton High School
11	Concord-Carlisle High School	Doherty Memorial High School	Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School
12	Dracut High School	Drury High School	Brockton High School
13	Essex Agricultural and Technical High School	Easthampton High School	Canton High School
14	Everett High School	Franklin County Technical School	Cape Cod Regional Technical High School
15	Fitchburg High School	Franklin High School	Carver Middle-High School
16	Framingham High School	Gateway Regional High School	Dedham High School
17	Greater Lowell Technical High School	Grafton High School	Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School
18	Groton-Dunstable Regional High School	High School of Commerce	Dighton-Rehoboth Regional High School
19	Haverhill High School	Holyoke Catholic High School	Diman Regional Vocational Technical High School
20	Joseph P. Keefe Technical High School	Holyoke High School	Drury High School
21	Lawrence High School	Hopkins Academy	Duxbury High School
22	Leominster Center for Technical Education Leominster High School	Leicester High School	East Bridgewater High School
23	Lexington High School	Lenox Memorial High School	Easthampton High School

24	Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School	Milford High School	Franklin County Technical School
25	Lowell High School	Millbury Junior/Senior High School	Hanover High School
26	Lunenburg High School	Millis High School	Hopkins Academy
27	Lynn Classical High School	Mount Greylock Regional High School	Hull High School
28	Malden High School	Nipmuc Regional High School	Madison Park High School
29	Marlborough High School	North Brookfield High School	Marshfield High School
30	Medfield High School	North High School	Martha's Vineyard Regional High School
31	Medford High School	Northampton High School	Middleborough High School
32	Medford Vocational Technical High School	Northbridge High School	Millbury Junior/Senior High School
33	Middlesex School	Oxford High School	Monument Mountain Regional High School
34	Murdock Middle/High School	Pathfinder Vocational Technical High School	Mount Everett Regional School
35	Nashoba Regional High School	Pioneer Valley Regional School	Newton North High School
36	Natick High School	Pittsfield High School	North Brookfield High School
37	Needham High School	Quaboag Regional Middle High School	Northbridge High School
38	Newburyport High School	Ralph C. Mahar Regional High School	Norton High School
39	Newton North High School	Shepherd Hill Regional High School	Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School
40	Newton South High School	Shrewsbury High School	Oliver Ames High School
41	Newton Central High School	Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School	Pathfinder Vocational Technical High School
42	North Andover High School		Pembroke High School
	North Middlesex Regional High School	South Hadley High School	
43	Northeast Metro Tech	South High Community School	Plymouth North High School
44	Oakmont Regional High School	Southbridge High School	Plymouth South High School
45	Peabody Veterans Memorial High School	Springfield Central High School	Revere High School
46	Pentucket Regional High School	Springfield High School of Science and Technology	Riverview School
47	Quabbin Regional High School	Tantasqua Regional High School	Seekonk High School
48	Rockport High School	Tantasqua Regional Vocational School	Sharon High School
49	Salem High School	Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School	Shepherd Hill Regional High School
50	Saugus High School	Uxbridge High School	Somerset Berkley Regional High School
51	Shawsheen Valley Technical High School	Wachusett Regional High School	South Shore Vocational Technical High School

52	Tewksbury Memorial High School	West Boylston Middle/High School	Southbridge High School
53	Triton Regional High School	Westfield High School	Springfield Central High School
54	Tyngsborough High School	Westfield Vocational Technical High School	Stoughton High School
55	Wachusett Regional High School	Worcester Technical High School	Taunton High School
56	Watertown High School	Worcester Public School (WPS Transition Program)	TechBoston Academy
57	Wellesley High School		The Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School
58	Westborough High School		Uxbridge High School
59	Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School		Westfield High School
60	Winchester High School		Whitman-Hanson Regional High School
61			Winthrop High School
62			
63			

MRC 2015 Needs Assessment

Thank you for taking part in the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) annual Consumer Needs Assessment. This survey is from the Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Needs Assessment Committee and MRC as part of a process to address consumer needs for human services that support their ability to live independently and work in the community. Your responses will assist in ensuring that services provided by MRC address the current needs of individuals with disabilities in Massachusetts, including youths. MRC depends on your input to guide future service planning, special project development, and future funding proposals.

Choose the response that best describes your need for services in each area. Please be assured that all responses are secure and confidential. Again, we thank you for your participation. The MRC and SRC highly value your input and suggestions.

1. What is your preferred method of communication with MRC?

- ☐ Mail
 ☐ Text Message
☐ Face to Face
 ☐ Cellphone
☐ Email
 ☐ Phone (Home/Work)
☐ Other (please explain): _____

2. How long have you been receiving services from MRC?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
 ☐ 1-2 years
 ☐ 2-4 years
 ☐ 5-9 years
 ☐ 10 or more years

3. What type of housing do you live in right now?

- ☐ I own a house/condo/apartment
 ☐ I rent an apartment without subsidy
☐ I live with parents/family
 ☐ I live with friends / roommate(s)
☐ I rent a subsidized apartment (such as Section 8 or public housing)
☐ I live in a nursing/rest home
 ☐ I live in a group home or rooming / boarding house
☐ Other (please explain) _____

Section 1: Employment, Training, and Education

4. The following is a list of vocational services provided by MRC. Please indicate how important each service is to you using the rating list below:

	1=Very Important	2=Somewhat Important	3=Not Important	4=No Opinion
Assistance finding a job / job placement	1	2	3	4
Assistance transitioning from High School to work/college.	1	2	3	4
Career counseling and assessment	1	2	3	4
Learning about public benefits (e.g., SSI, SSDI, food stamps, work incentives)/Benefits planning	1	2	3	4
Obtaining a college degree	1	2	3	4
Obtaining a GED or High School Diploma	1	2	3	4

On-The-Job Training and Employer-run trainings (for consumers)	1	2	3	4
Pre-Employment Transition Services for High School Students such as career exploration, internships and work readiness training	1	2	3	4
Services to assist you in keeping your job (Ongoing and extended supports) such as job coaching	1	2	3	4
Starting a home-based business/ self-employment	1	2	3	4
Supported Employment services to assist you in choosing, obtaining, and maintaining employment	1	2	3	4
Vocational training, certificate programs, or technical schools	1	2	3	4
Work-readiness training and Soft-Skills training	1	2	3	4

5. The following is a list of factors that are important to people looking for work. Please circle how important each item is to you using the rating list below:

	1=Very Important	2=Somewhat Important	3=Not Important	4=No Opinion
Accessibility to Transportation/Location	1	2	3	4
Friendly environment	1	2	3	4
Health insurance	1	2	3	4
Job Satisfaction/Personal Interests	1	2	3	4
Number of hours	1	2	3	4
Opportunities for promotion/advancement	1	2	3	4
Pension or retirement benefits	1	2	3	4
Vacation/Sick/Personal time	1	2	3	4
Wages or salary	1	2	3	4

6. What types of jobs/occupations are you interested in? (Choose all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Retail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts/Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Employment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community/Social/Human Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers/Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance/Repair | <input type="checkbox"/> Warehouse/Stock/Inventory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance/Repair | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education / Childcare | <input type="checkbox"/> Management | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering / Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial | <input type="checkbox"/> Military/ Law Enforcement/ Safety | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Specify): _____ | | |

7. Based on your experience as a participant in the MRC Vocational Rehabilitation program, how often has MRC provided services to assist you towards reaching your educational and career needs?

- ☐ Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Not applicable / Unsure / Don't know

Please explain: _____

8. Based on your experience, how has MRC not met your needs? Please explain:

9. How satisfied are you with your involvement in the development of your MRC Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)?

1= Very Satisfied	2 = Somewhat Satisfied	3= Somewhat Dissatisfied	4= Very Dissatisfied
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Please explain:

Section 2. Transportation and Community Living Needs

10. The following is a list of Community Living programs and services provided by MRC and its partner organizations. Please circle how important each service is to you using the rating list below:

Community Living Service	1=Very Important	2=Somewhat Important	3=Not Important	4=No Opinion
Accessible recreation opportunities	1	2	3	4
Affordable housing (Mass Access Housing Registry)	1	2	3	4
Assistive devices (wheelchair, voice activation, device to grab objects, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Brain Injury services (case management, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Consumer Involvement Program	1	2	3	4
Home accessibility / modifications	1	2	3	4
Home and Community-Based Waiver Services	1	2	3	4
Home Care services (housekeeping, laundry, shopping, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Individual Consumer Consultant (ICC) Program	1	2	3	4
Personal Care Attendants (assistance bathing, dressing, eating, etc.)	1	2	3	4
Supported Living Services	1	2	3	4
Vehicle modification (hand controls, lifts, ramps)	1	2	3	4

11. Are you aware of the Independent Living Center (ILC) in your area run by people with disabilities?* (i.e Stavros, Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL), Independence Associates (IA), Cape Organization for the Rights of the Disabled (CORD), Center for Living and Working (CLW), AdLib, Metro West Center for Independent Living (MWCIL, Northeast Independent Living Program (NILP, etc.)

☐ Yes ☐ No

12. Which transportation options do you use now? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Adaptive Vehicle/Lift Equipped Van
☐ Assisted Ride/Door to Door Service (i.e. the Ride)
☐ Bike ☐ Public Transportation (MBTA/RTA trains, buses, etc.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool/Ride Sharing | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi / ferry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends/Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Access Pass (TAP) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My own vehicle/car | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None, I usually stay home | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ | |

13. What additional transportation services do you need? Please check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptive vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi/Ferry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistance purchasing a vehicle / Donated Vehicle Program | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assisted Ride/Door to Door Service (i.e. the Ride) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better information about travel options in your area / travel planning | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carpool / Ride Sharing | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Access Pass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driver's Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> None, I do not need additional assistance with transportation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public transportation (MBTA/RTA, trains, buses, etc.) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ | |

14. Is transportation a barrier to you obtaining employment?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please explain: _____

15. How useful are the services provided by MRC in supporting your ability to maintain your independence in the community?

- ☐ Not at all ☐ Somewhat ☐ Extremely ☐ Not applicable / Unsure / Don't know

Please explain _____

Section 3. Overall Human Services Needs

16. Are there any other services and/or supports you need which are not mentioned above that would improve your independence and ability to live and work in the community?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure / Don't know

If so, please explain what additional services you need: _____

17. Overall, what is the single most important MRC service you need that you DO currently receive? (Please list one) _____

18. Overall, what is the most important MRC service you need that you do NOT currently receive? (Please list one) _____

19. Do you have any other suggestions or comments on how MRC can assist you? Do you have further needs which are not identified here?

* * * * *

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.
Your cooperation is greatly appreciated!**

**If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the MRC
Consumer Involvement Department
617-204-3665**

Consumer.Involvement@massmail.state.ma.us

**For information on the Independent Living Center near you, please
visit [THIS LINK](#)**